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February 4th, 1982 ★ Volume 17, Number 5 ★ 17th Year of Publishing ★ SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

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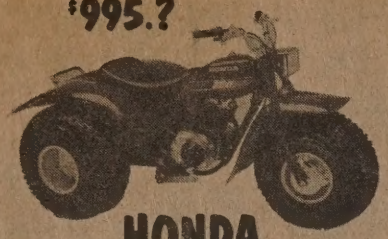

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EDITORIAL

REPORT ON THE STRIPED BASS HEARING — DECEMBER 9, 1981

If we were to summarize the hearing, we would be forced to describe it as a disappointment. It was disappointing on two fronts. First, it was plain to all from the outset that the DEC had no intention of modifying its plan based upon citizen input at the public hearing. We alluded to this in our spoken comments when we said: "We hope the comment [from Mr. Taormina] regarding the urgent need for legislation does not mean the DEC is unwilling to adjust its plan before submission based upon the expression of concern and criticism expressed here tonight—especially in light of your [Mr. Taormina] earlier comment on the foolishness of passing laws that most people disagree with."

The second disappointment was the small turnout of "concerned anglers." We ran into two young men who approached us as we came in and wondered where everyone was. I tried to make them feel better and to avoid my personal embarrassment, I suggested that others who came home late from work would filter in as the evening wore on. The two gentlemen indicated that they came from Manhattan and gave up dinner in order to be at the meeting hall in time for the start of the meeting. They were quite upset with the poor turnout, and the crowd became smaller and not larger.

We have expressed similar concerns in these pages before. It seems obvious to us that not everyone can race around after politicians, devise legislation, attend meetings out of state, etc.; but it is within the ability of most fishermen to support efforts on behalf of conservation and management. As with all similar endeavors, there is a small nucleus of people who work tirelessly on a variety of conservation and management projects. These people are dedicated and hard-working and although they could frequently use more help, they seldom balk at the reality that they must go it alone or in the company of a small group. The work gets done, and the sacrifices are made. Then comes the time when the rest of us can get into the act. These dedicated few ask us to write letters or turn out for public meetings. At such times, it is imperative that we do our thing! Who are these dedicated people?

Fred Schwab is our citizen representative to the State/Federal Striped Bass Project. In the last three years, he has been traveling to many of the states along the Eastern Seaboard to attend meetings intended to allow the states to reach a compromise on the management of striped bass. Make no mistake, Fred is not paid for his long hours. Why does he do it then, you ask? His willingness to serve comes from a deep love of the striped bass and a commitment to a better management future. Fred's remarks were well developed and intelligently presented. At the conclusion of his presentation on that night, he urged us in his comments not to react in a totally negative and emotional manner to the DEC proposal, suggesting instead that we criticize what is bad, applaud what is good, and make recommendations for changes. He cautioned that if we did not take this approach, it was possible that we might lose an opportunity for management of the species in New York State and he hinted that the same result might befall the State/Federal effort.

Fred's comments were right on track. It may make us feel better to viciously attack people and/or proposals, but this kind of self-indulgent approach does nothing for conservation and management in the long run. Unfortunately, few at the hearing followed his advice. Many people spoke of throwing away the proposal without considering that by throwing it away a vacuum in striped bass management would be the residue.

Another angler who has been in the thick of striped bass management and conservation for many years is Bob Rance of Save Our Stripers. Although it was apparent that Save Our Stripers has a long-standing contempt for DEC lethargy on striped bass, Bob's words were carefully chosen to criticize portions of the DEC proposal, agree with some elements, and suggest weaknesses in the overall approach of DEC in formulating its proposal.

One gentleman presented a sarcastic abuse of the DEC, which was perhaps humorous in spots, but which in a general sense discredited the efforts over many years to bring about meaningful management of finfish in New York State. We have heard this man before and others like him, and although they are capable of cleverly mocking most agencies, proposals, and

(Continued on page 28.)

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Features:

BLUEFIN TUNA UPDATE ..... Al Ristori 6
KNOW YOUR MONO ..... John Konior 8
Building a 13' Surf Stick:
REACHING OUT ..... William A. Muller 12
FISH & MARINE NEWS ..... Fred Guardineer 15
Tackle Doctor:
POPPERS & PARACHUTES ..... Fisherman Staff 16
SPINNING OR CONVENTIONAL ..... D. W. Anthony.....18
Rod Building:
MOUNTING REEL SEATS ..... C. Boyd Pfeiffer.....21
A BETTER MARKER BUOY ..... Ken Gerhardt.....24
How-To:
HOOK DISGORGER ..... Don Avondolio 26

Departments:

Editorial 2
Pass It On 4
Fishing Reports 28
Fisherman's Classified 34

About the Cover—

The quest for a giant tuna is reflected in the glare of this angler's sunglasses. Sport fishing efforts for bluefins may be hampered by new quotas this season. See page 6 for the latest news on this issue.

COMING NEXT WEEK: **LONG ISLAND BOAT SHOW ISSUE**

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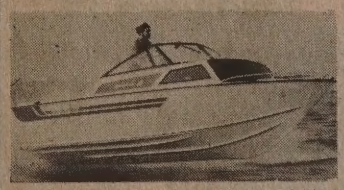

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GATEWAY STRIPERS ELECTS NEW OFFICERS FOR '82

Gateway Stripers of Belle Harbor, New York is pleased to announce the election of its new officers, as follows:

President—Joe Moreno; Vice Pres—Bob Lekowski; Treasurer—Jack Mendler Recording Sec'y—Chuck Nemser; Corr. Sec'y—Vinny Slikas; Recorders—Ron Turbin and John Marsillo.

The club would also like to thank Messrs. Brian Young and Chet Zawacki of the DEC and Mr. Fred Schwab, Chairman of the NYS Advisory Council for attending our December meeting and sharing their views with us.

BOATING COURSE

Islip Flotilla 1-3 of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary will be offering a course on Boating Skills and Seamanship at the East Islip Senior High School on Redman Street in Islip Terrace. The course consists of 13, two hour lessons commencing on February 11, 1982 at 8PM. It is designed to enhance safety awareness and provide greater proficiency which will make your boating safe and more trouble free.

Registration will be held at the high school on **January 25, 26,** and **27** from 7-9PM, or at the first class. The cost of the course is $10 which includes the text and workbook. Additional information may be obtained by calling 589-8354.

SAFE BOATING COURSE

The United Power Squadron's boating course will be given by the Bronx Power Squadron starting on Tuesday, February 9, 1982 at 7:30PM. Classes will be held at the New York State Maritime College, Fort Schuyler, foot of Pennyfield Ave., under the Throgs Neck Bridge.

Course includes instruction in handling crafts under normal and adverse conditions, how to read and chart courses, how to use a compass and interpret navigational aids.

For further information, call Lt/C Tony Moscati, (212) 881-5752.

ATLANTIS ANGLERS

The Atlantic Anglers held their annual Dinner-Dance on January 16, 1982 at Antun's in Hicksville. The following members won trophies:
Flounder: H. Sternberg, 2.12.
Blackfish: John Oppenheimer, 6.10
Codfish: Lloyd Harrington, 36 lbs.
Fluke: Howard Sternberg, 6 lbs.
Bluefish: George Maisch, 18.1
Weakfish: Howard Sternberg, 13.2
Yellowfin Tuna: Mark Kaufman, 57.8
Blue Shark: Bill Kost, 180 lbs.
Striped Bass: Neil Jacobson, 25.4
Mako Shark: Mark Kaufman, 215 lbs.
Albacore: Mark Kaufman, 8 lbs.

The Outstanding Fisherman Award was renamed for the three club members who were lost in a fishing accident last June, and is now called the William Duncan, Irwin Silberger, Paul Howcott Memorial Award for the most Outstanding Fisherman of 1981, which was won by Mark Kaufman; 1st Runner-Up Howard Sternberg; 2nd Runner-Up Blanche Goodman.

The following Associate Members (family members) won trophies:
Fluke: Fran Zaretsky, 4.1
Blackfish: Leonard Oppenheimer, 4.9
Flounder (tie): Dianne Oppenheimer, Sandra Kosts, 1 lb.
Bluefish: Rita Caracciolo, 15 lbs.
Weakfish: Elaine Gattus, 10 lbs.

FREE BOATING COURSE

A 7-lesson course in Boating Skills and Seamanship will be given by Flotilla 13-10 of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, beginning Tuesday, **February 9-March 23** at Sear's Hicksville on North Broadway. They will start at 7:30-9:30PM. The lessons will be designed for beginning and intermediate levels and family participation is encouraged. The course is offered free. Upon successful completion of the course, registrants will receive a handsome certificate from the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.

For further information, please call Alan Scheinker at (516) 433-9487.

HUNTINGTON ANGLER'S CLUB

Following is the list of officers for the 1982 season:

President—Ken Ducker; Vice Pres—Bill Ricca; Rec. Sec'y—John Ambrosio; Corres. Sec'y—Dan Marro; Treas—John Stone; Sgts.-at-Arms—Charles Tota, Bill Collins, Jr.

The Board of Directors: Bob Schneider, John Tarlen, Gary Beringer and Bob Tota.

S.O.S. TO VISIT GATEWAY STRIPERS

On Thursday, February 11, 1982, members of the organization Save Our Stripers will be present at an Open House meeting of the Gateway Striper Club to present its views on the status of the striped bass in our area. All those interested are invited to attend.

The Club is also accepting applications for new members. Anyone who is interested in surf fishing and being part of an active and involved organization, is invited to join. For further information and directions, call John Marsillo at (212) 854-1020.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS TREE

If one was walking around Smith's Point County Park a few hours after sunrise on Saturday, January 16, you might have wondered about a small group of men working to put up a 20'x20'x40' long tent or the funny camouflage-colored Army trucks parked in a line. This was the beginning of one of the most important conservation projects that

the Long Island Beach Buggy Assn., Inc. does each year to help save Long Island beaches. This tend and the rest of the 42nd Maintenance Battalion equipment and vehicles to come at 0800 hours would be used by about 200 community minded volunteers in Operation Christmas Tree. There would also be six Boy Scout Troops to aid in loading the unused Christmas trees onto the trucks and placing them on the dunes of the outer beach at Smith's Point Park, which is being badly eroded by this year's winter storms. When these trees are placed butt first to the ocean, sand will collect around and filter down between the branches and a natural barrier will begin to develop to help stop erosion on the outer beach.

Much of the dune line at Smith's Point Park has unused Christmas trees in them to stem high tides and winter storms.

LIBBA has been doing this project for 14 years. The 42nd Maintenance Battalion Comp. "F" Riverhead, National Guard was asked to help three years ago because of rapidly rising costs of owning and operating four-wheel drive vehicles and has cut the number of LIBBA volunteers in recent years, so fewer trees get moved to the beaches.

This year's operation had to be cancelled because of record-breaking below zero temperatures on Sunday. The remaining trees will be moved onto the beach Sunday, February 7th, weather permitting. There was an estimated 16,000 trees collected this year for the project.

Bruce Wolfson, President of LIBBA said that this year's operation was coordinated by Ed Wissenbach, Jr., Director Operation Christmas Tree; George Swanson, Director Courtesy Patrol; John Chester, Suffolk County Parks Commissioner; 2nd Lt. Frank Ombres and 2nd Lt. Richard Catina, Comp. "F," 42nd Maintenance Battalion, Riverhead.

The Boy Scout Troops that participated this year were: 675 West Babylon; 179 West Islip; 159 Islip; 556 Medford; 683 Hicksville, and 443 Middle Island.

TRAINING FILM AVAILABLE ON NEW RULES OF ROAD

A training film on the new "Unified" Rules of the Road is now available from Houston Marine Consultants, Inc.

The 80-minute, full-color program is divided into three parts of approximately 27 minutes each, covering General Rules (including fog signals), Lights and Dayshapes, and Steering and Sailing Rules. All the new requirements which became effective December 24, 1981 are covered by the program, which is available in 16mm film and all videotape formats.

For companies that operate offshore, Houston Marine Consultants, Inc., also has developed a companion film on the International Rules of the Road. Details on prices and ordering information can be obtained from Houston Marine Consultants, Inc., 1600 20th St., Kenner, Louisiana 70062, (504) 469-9013.

NEPTUNE POWER SQUADRON FREE BOATING COURSE

Commander Stuart A. Horn of Huntington's Neptune Power Squadron, a unit of the U.S. Power Squadrons, has announced the spring boating course schedule. Registration for the free course is at 8PM, Wednesday, February 10, at Walt Whitman High School, West Hills Road, Huntington Station; and at 8PM, Tuesday, February 23 at Northport High School, Elwood Road, Northport.

Classes will begin on the same night as registration. There will be a nominal fee of $11 for course material. Late registration will also be accepted before classes the following week. The same course will be offered at both schools. The Neptune Squadron has offered these 10-week, 2 hour class courses to boating enthusiasts for over 40 years. Additional information can be obtained by calling 427-4622 or 421-0774.

HARBOR FISHING CLUB

The following is a list of officers elected for 1982 of the Harbor Fishing Club of Huntington:

John Holthusen, Pres.; Harry Maura, Vice Pres.; Frank Traversa, Treasurer, and Mike Nicoletto, Sec'y.

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BLUEFIN TUNA UPDATE

by Al Ristori

My article in the December 10th issue posed the question "Will there be tuna fishing in 1982?" I then went on to discuss the possible ramifications of last Fall's ICCAT meeting, at which scientists from many countries agreed that bluefin tuna stocks in the western Atlantic are in such bad shape that all fishing should be terminated. That proposition was modified to provide for a catch of 800 tons for scientific monitoring. After attending a couple of important meetings, I can now assure you that there will indeed be bluefin tuna fishing in 1982—though it will be at reduced levels.

On January 7, I joined a group of Montauk, Shinnecock, and Connecticut charter skippers and other concerned fishermen at a meeting in Gurney's Inn with Congressman William Carney (R-NY). Carl Darenberg, Jr., put that meeting together in order that the Congressman could explain his position in relation to the legislation calling for inclusion of tunas in the 200 mile limit. The latest meeting was that of the tuna advisory board at the State Department on January 19. The net result of these two meetings is the assurance that there will be a rod and reel tuna season this year, though the numbers involved are still subject to change—and there might be seasonal restrictions and lowered bag limits.

The best news coming out of these meetings is that it does appear as if the Japanese are being eased out of the bluefin tuna fishery. The Departments of State and Commerce seem to have acquired the backbone that was missing in the previous Administration. Though this is the period when the Japanese would ordinarily be fishing for pre-spawning giant bluefins in the Gulf of Mexico, there are no Japanese longliners presently fishing within our 200 mile limit. Up to this point, Commerce hasn't issued the billfish permits which those vessels require in order to fish in our waters. Though they can't keep the billfish, they also can't completely avoid them; and thus, require the permit. No permit—no fishing! The Japanese are talking about suing (I heard in Washington they've hired Carter's NOAA Administrator, Richard Frank as their lawyer), but if Commerce holds them off for another month or two the giants will be out of harm's way.

The power to put the Japanese out of this fishery has always been available to the State Department. While the Councils and NMFS determine the surplus for foreign fishing, it's State which divides it up among the participants. Since the Japanese get over 1,000,000 metric tons of fish from our waters for a pittance, there is every indication that they are ready to do so now!

As a result, the Advisory Board meeting in Washington proceeded on the basis that the Japanese will have no directed bluefin tuna fishery. An allocation of 81 metric tons of small and medium bluefins was set aside for the Japanese longline fleet fishing for yellowfins, albacore and bigeyes. That is strictly an incidental catch quota, and is far less than the estimated 250 tons of small and medium bluefins they are presently taking. However, Carmen Blondin (our ICCAT Commissioner) feels that the Japanese are actually targeting on bluefins during the late fall North Atlantic fishery—and that they can live with the smaller allocation.

Though everything is tentative at this time, the rod and reel school tuna fishery is being kept at the same 110 ton level that the catch was estimated at last year. According to NMFS Southeast Fisheries Center Director William Fox, Jr. (who prepared the monitoring plan), rod and reel catches provide the best opportunity for monitoring the stock. Purse seine

catches mean little since single schools are involved and effort is impossible to measure. After all, if there was but one school of small tuna left in the western Atlantic, there's little doubt that a spotter plane could find it and put a purse seiner on the spot! However, the purse seiners are being allowed 76 tons of school bluefins as a by-catch in the skipjack fishery. At least, that's the way it started out. By the time the meeting was finished, it was no longer strictly by-catch; and the seiners (who have created the present predicament) were insisting on still more directed catch!

When the State Department meeting started, the monitoring system called for 406 metric tons of giants. That was broken down into 400 tons "Canadian and U.S. rod and reel," two tons for U.S. swordfish by-catch, and four tons for Canadian by-catch. At first, it appeared as if Commerce was going to follow the bold step taken by the Canadians several years ago and restrict the giant tuna fishery to rod and reel. However, it turned out that the Southeast Fisheries Center people didn't realize the difference between "rod and reel" and "handgear" (which includes harpoon and handline). Therefore, we'll be splitting that 400 tons not only with the Canadians—but also with commercial handliners and harpooners. Optimistically, the Committee figured that the Canadians will settle for 112 tons while we retain 288. Frankly, I'll be surprised if the Canadians settle for less than 250 tons. Remember that they restricted their fishermen to rod and reel several years ago, while we continued to permit handlining, harpooning, and purse seining. That fact isn't going to be lost on them in the negotiations!

Unfortunately, the purse seiners once again prevailed and got an additional 60 tons of giant tuna—even though the scientists don't need it for their monitoring program. Furthermore, the by-catch for American swordfish longliners was pushed up to 37 tons—which is a more realistic figure than the original two. Those additions bring the total giant tuna removals to 503 metric tons.

By and large, I was pleased with these two meetings. For the first time it appears that the scientific warnings of impending disaster in our tuna fishery have finally gotten through, and it's most encouraging to see our State and Commerce Departments taking the side of East Coast domestic fishermen. Of course, that's largely due to the pressure being exerted for bringing tuna into the 200 mile limit—a move that the West Coast tuna interests want to avoid at all costs, even to the extent of supporting the present ICCAT agreement.

However, all is not well. We started out at the State Department meeting talking about how bad the scientific evidence about tuna stocks looks (the scientists say there would be a net decline this year even with no fishing at all!) and ended up giving the purse seiners 60 tons of giant tuna which the scientists don't need for the monitoring program. In addition to the seiners' continual effort to get greater allocations, a representative of the Massachusetts handliners objected to any cut at all under any circumstances. That contrasts with the attitude of the charter skippers at the Montauk meeting who indicated a desire to accept greater restrictions in order to save the fishery.

Hopefully there'll be a change in the negative aspects I observed before this is all over, but I'm not so naive as to suspect that the desired results will be achieved without the input of thousands of concerned anglers. On February 8th, the negotiations between all countries involved in the western Atlantic bluefin tuna fishery opens in Miami. When that's over, we'll know exactly what will be available to us this year. Just how that will be divided up will be the subject of several future public hearings. We'll keep you posted in upcoming articles, and trust that you'll respond with letters, telegrams, and attendance at public hearings—all the elements required in order to assure the future of a troubled fishery and a fair shake for recreational fishermen.

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KNOW YOUR MONO

by John Konior

It seems to be an old story. Anglers go out and pay a small fortune for fishing tackle, buying the best they can afford, then forget about probably the most important element: fishing line. It's quite easy to do. When faced with a rather large bill for a rod and reel one tends to look for bargains elsewhere. Too often it's the choice for bargain lines.

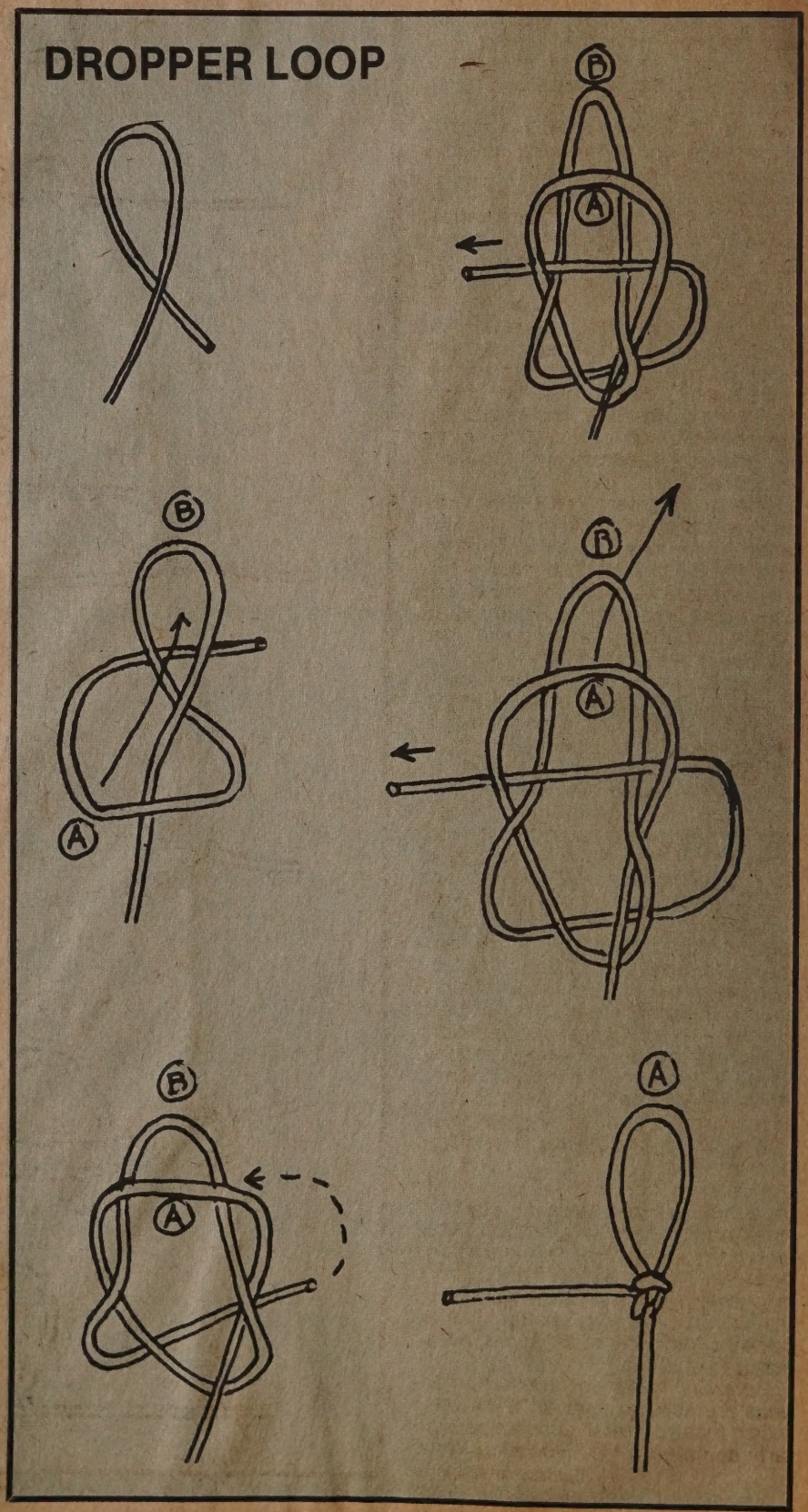
Don't get me wrong. Fishing line has come a long way since linen, and even braided nylon. In days of yore, it was standard procedure to wash off linen line with fresh water and common practice to remove all the line from the spool to dry it. This had to be done almost each time you went fishing. With the introduction of braided nylon, much of these problems were overcome. However, braided nylon still left much to be desired, particularly in heavier lines. Braided nylon tended to stretch a great deal and woe the angler who developed a bird's-nest.

When mono was first introduced, in the late 40s I believe, it was not without its problems. Early mono was heavy in diameter in relationship to pound test; it was brittle, tended to break off easily when used for casting, and was not uniform in diameter. As time went on, the quality of the line improved immensely to the point where even today's bargain brands are vastly superior to even the most expensive lines at that time.

Today science has made it possible, at reasonable cost, to acquire lines that are really quite outstanding. There's no doubt that the serious fisherman already knows the importance of using good quality mono. However, the occasional fisherman should also use the same quality, if for no other reason than to assure himself of not losing fish on those days when he or she does get out.

Among the better lines available today are such brands as Ande, DuPont, Stren, Berkley Trilene, Maxima, Shakespeare Sigma and Garcia Bonnyl. While definitely more expensive than bargain brands, the cost is certainly worthwhile. For example, the cost of a 1/4 lb. spool of Ande mono is between $4 and $5 compared to $1 - $2 for a typical bargain brand. The costs for Stren and Trilene, etc., tend to be somewhat higher.

Typically, a 1/4 lb. spool has sufficient line, depending upon the test selected, to fill two or more reels. When you consider that aspect you realize that the cost of a really high



quality mono is not all that expensive.

What makes a good quality mono different from the so-called bargain brands? Actually, quite a few things. First is uniformity. The diameter of the line is very consistent. Therefore, the breaking strength of the line along its entire length will be extremely unfirom. For example, if you purchase 15 lb. test mono it's certain that when buying a high quality mono that its strength will be as close to 15 lb. test from beginning to end. With bargain brands, the actual pound test could be much higher, or even lower, but worse, could vary along its length. Second, is controlled stretch. Stretch can work for or against you. Too much, and it's akin to fishing with a rubber band and a lot harder to set a hook, or for that matter, feel a bite. Too little, and the line will snap when casting. Third is abrasion resistance. Saltwater fishing is tough on mono what with sand, rocks, etc. High quality mono is designed to take abuse. Fourth is limpness. Here, again, the better quality lines tend to remain softer, and, therefore, are easier to work with throughout an entire season. Bargain brands all too often work themselves into something resembling a coil spring after some use, making it extremely difficult to cast or reel.

Fifth is diameter. The better lines are generally much thinner in diameter for the same breaking strength than their cheaper counterparts. Thinner lines make casting easier and offer less resistance, making it possible to use lighter lures and sinkers. In addition to these factors, be aware of other less subtle aspects of mono. When mono is immersed in water it is absorbent. Mono tends to weaken when wet. High quality mono is designed to remain at at least the specified breaking strength whether wet or dry. The inferior grades could lose a high percentage of strength when wet. While the vast majority of us are not concerned with establishing a world record, the IGFA is quite strict about line strength. Inferior mono seldom passes the test concerning line class specifications. In fact, there's even a superior grade of mono now on the market which is designed to adhere to pound test specifications as set forth by the IGFA (International Game Fish Association). There's obviously little need for most of us to be concerned, unless you're really intent on establishing a world's record.

It all boils down to the practicality of spending a little more initially to at least assure yourself a better chance of landing your fish while making fishing a bit easier and more enjoyable. Now that you're convinced that it pays to buy better line (I hope?), let's discuss some other features of mono.

Be aware that mono exerts tremendous pressure on a spool. Most reels today feature metal spools, particularly spinning reels. However, some

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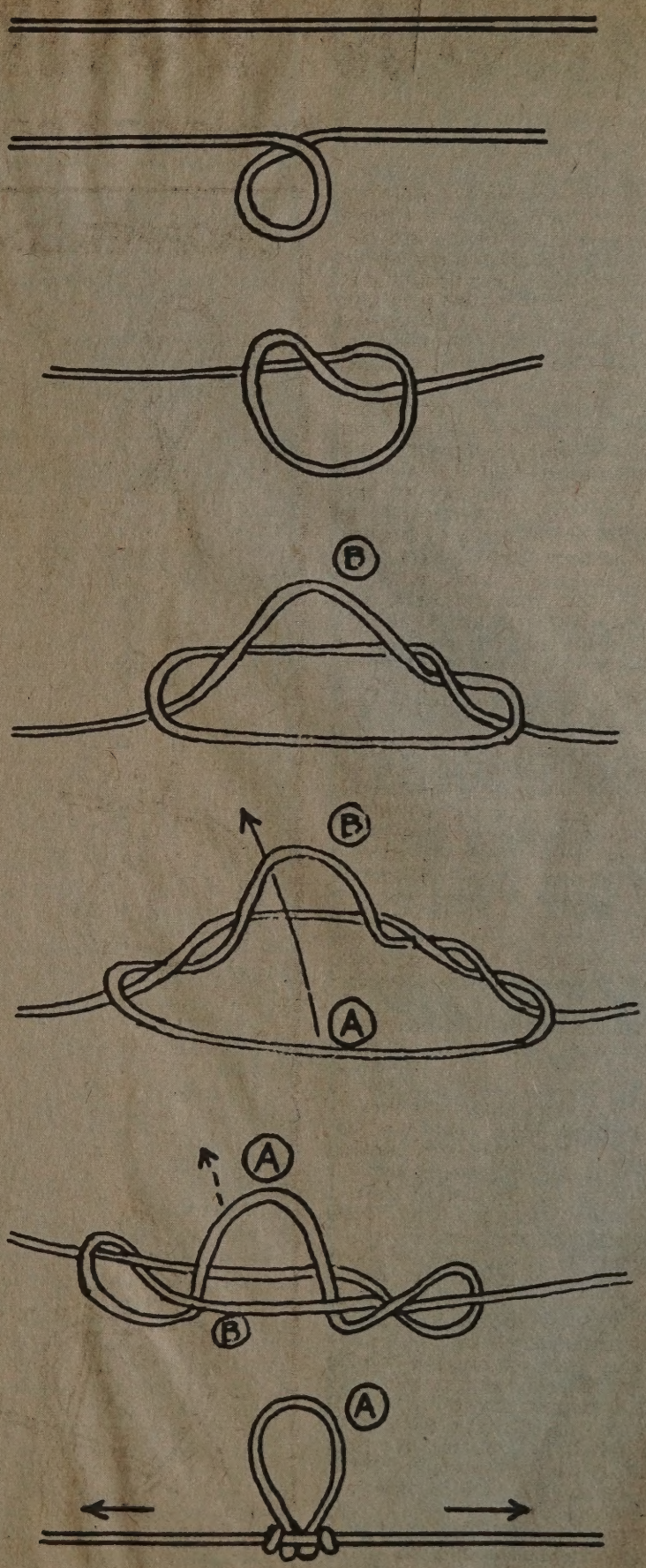
SINKER KNOT



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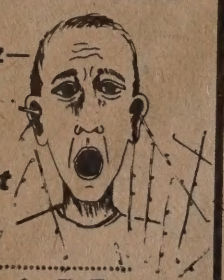

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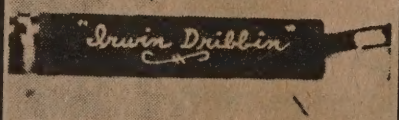

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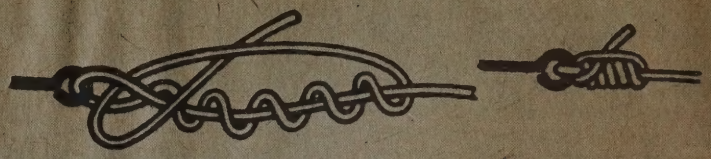
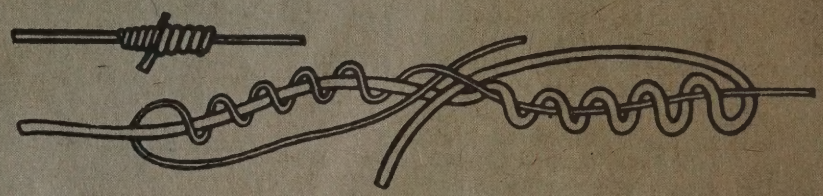
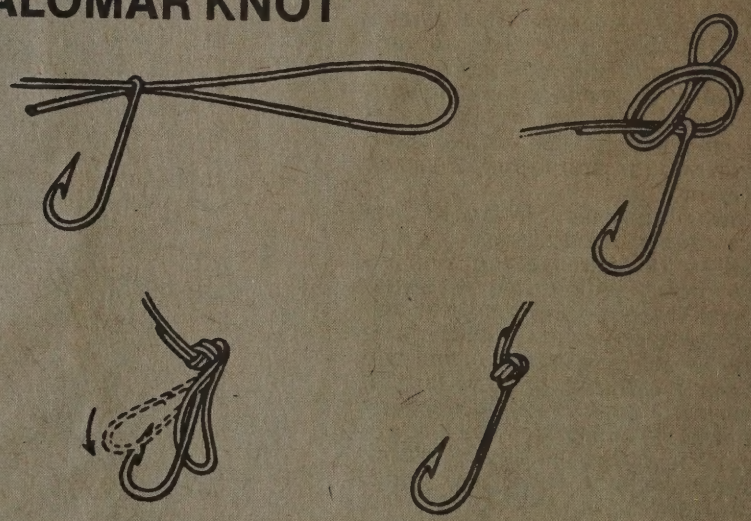


BLOOD KNOT



PALOMAR KNOT



SPECIES	SPINNING LB. TEST	CONVENTIONAL LB. TEST
Blackfish	12-15	20-30
Bluefish	15-20	30-40
Cod	20-25	30-50
Flounder	6-12	15-25
Fluke	6-15	20-30
Porgy	6-15	20-30
Snappers	4- 6	15-20
Stripers	12-20	20-40
Weakfish	6-15	20-30
Whiting/Ling	12-15	20-30

conventional reels still come equipped with plastic spools. The pressure exerted by mono will most probably either crack or warp plastic spools, unless backed by linen or softer line. It therefore pays to buy a reel with a metal spool to avoid any problems. Mono is very abrasive. After prolonged usage mono will cut into rod guides and the roller on a spinning reel bail. A vicious circle ensues because the cuts on guides and rollers will, in turn, ruin your mono. For these reasons, always look to buy rods and reels which feature carboloy or ceramic guides and rollers, or at least a rod with a tip guide made of these materials. Here again, the initial higher price is far cheaper in the long run.

At the conclusion of a fishing trip examine your line, and for that matter, during the course of fishing. When you detect abrasions on the line, cut off that section and re-rig. Abrasions and cuts in mono will cause it to lose significant breaking strength. Make it a practice to cut off and discard 15' to 20' of the line before the next fishing trip. It's that section which takes the most abuse.

Although mono is quite strong, it's

not impervious. Mono is manufactured from nylon, and nylon does deteriorate when exposed to sunlight. For this reason even the best quality mono should be discarded after a season's use regardless of how good it still appears. Mono will even deteriorate when on the shelf for too long a period, especially if exposed to sunlight. When purchasing mono, buy from a reputable dealer, one who is known to sell at high volume. The bargain price one may encounter from time to time, may not always be a bargain.

Another aspect of the use of mono one should be acutely aware of is its slicing power. When mono is taut it becomes extremely rigid and can cut into a finger or hand quite easily. Believe me, I know. You'll encounter this situation when casting or when hung up in the bottom. Surf casters, using spinning reels, often suffer from a perpetual cut finger joint on the finger that holds the line while casting. Those of us around who still use conventional reels while casting with mono suffer from a burnt thumb caused by the heat and friction generated by mono. However, the worst situation occurs when attempting to free a snag by pulling on mono. Unless you're careful the stuff cuts like a knife.

Now that you're aware of the advantages and disadvantages of mono, we'll discuss the preferred pound test required for the most prevalent species in our area, followed by a scenario on the use of line mono vs. leader material mono, and ending up with knots.

Mono is available in a wide range of line strength beginning with 2 lb. test (and even lighter) to well over 200 lb. test. The most prevalent tests are 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 20, 25, 30, 40, and 50. As a general rule, the lighter lines through 20 lb. test are appropriate for spinning tackle, with the heavier lines better suited for conventional reels. Use the information provided on the accompanying chart as a simple guide.

The range of line strength for each species listed is governed by the size of the fish being caught, plus other factors such as rough bottoms, current strength, and need for casting. It's obviously impossible to carry around as many extra spools with different line to suit the purpose. However, it's not at all unusual to have at least one extra spool loaded with another line strength. Given this premise, if you are using spinning gear, one spool of 12 lb. test should suffice. If two spools are employed, fill one with 8 lb., the other with 15. Should you go with one spool for conventional, make it 30 lb. test. With two spools, go with 20 and 40 lb. test.

Now let's get into the reasons behind using regular line vs. leader material in snelling hooks and preparing rigs. Leader material is also mono, but is manufactured with certain properties that make it appropriate as such. First off it is stiff; second, it generally has a diameter much larger than regular mono. The two properties go hand-in-hand. You want a stiff leader when tying hooks to prevent them from becoming entangled with the main line, or with themselves as in a two or three hook rig. Regular mono is much too limp for this purpose. The larger diameter of leader material does, in some measure, prevent bite-offs in cases where toothy fish swallow the hook, and in being more abrasion resistant. Leader material, you will find, tends to hold its shape and doesn't kink, which regular mono does. Enough said!

And finally, knots. Any knot, regardless of where and what material tied into, will weaken that material. In mono, the problem is even more acute. A hastily tied or improper knot could result in the knot slipping, and loss of as much as 50% of line strength. Think of the ramifications of using a 30 lb. test mono when into a gorilla bluefish of 20 lbs. and having a knot which weakens the line down to 15 lb. test! There are several acceptable knots one should use. They are as follows:

Improved Clinch—used for connecting snap swivels, lures such as jigs, Salty Dogs directly to the line, and even hooks or wire leaders to the line.

Blood Knot—used for joining similar strength mono to each other in the event of a break, when adding line or a heavier leader.

Loop Knot—to provide a connector for a snelled hook to the line, or in tying off a second hook as in a tandem hook rig.

Palomar Knot—used for tying hooks, lures, swivels, etc. Very strong!

Sinker Knot—a knot used to attach a sinker, but also can be used for attaching lures, swivels, etc.

Refer to the illustrations depicting these knots. For a fuller description and other knots, refer back to LIF Issue #5, Vol. 15, dated January 31, 1980, article entitled "Art of Knot Tying."

So there you have it concerning monofilament line. There's one more tip I'd like to pass on before closing. I'm sure that you've noticed that the leader material on snelled hooks comes in several colors; i.e., red, blue, yellow, as well as clear. If you're like me, I never found any place where you can buy leader material in strands or coils in other than the clear color. Whether it makes any difference to you, you can obtain any color you wish by dying the mono using regular clothes dye such as Tintex. A quarter to half a box of Tintex is more than sufficient to dye a half pound of leader material, which is a lot of line. Just follow the instructions on the Tintex box. Amazing, what you can do with mono, isn't it?

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BUILDING A 13' SURF STICK:

REACHING OUT

Part One — *by William A. Muller*

In recent years, there is more and more talk about switching from spinning gear and lures to conventional tackle and bait. In fact, one fellow I fish with uses a conventional outfit exclusively and for throwing lures as well as plugs. For many of us, the reality of the need for more bait fishing is a bitter pill to swallow, but we had better get used to the idea. Dwindling schools of bass, blues, and weaks along the surf zone means less feeding competition, fewer fish, less aggressive fish, and that adds up to fewer fish on artificials. The handwriting is on the wall and one need look no further than the October experiences along some South Shore beaches, where it took eels or bunker to turn even bluefish on. I remember one day when a half-dozen pluggers couldn't buy a fish while we scored well with eels.

The observations in the Fall of 1980 no doubt played a big role in formulating my winter "thinks." I prefer conventional for bait fishing and the one I had was too small and too old. It lacked backbone and resiliency at the same time. So, I made up my mind to retire the twenty-year-old stick and build a new one. I owe a word of thanks to George Valentine of Four Winds Bait and Tackle, because I picked his brain for the right blank, the right guides, and the right approach.

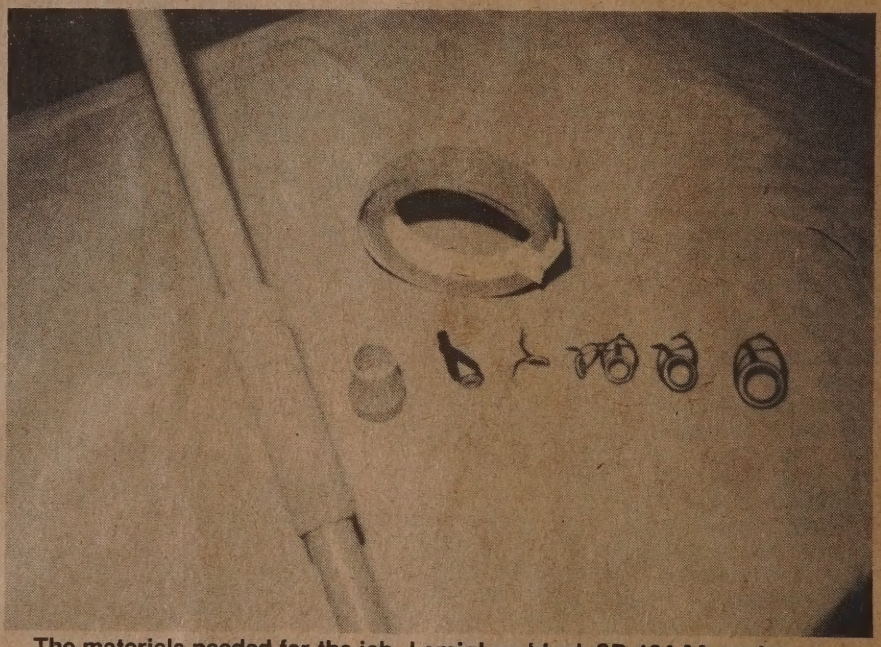
The rod is a beauty of a fish-fighting machine and I thought you might be in the same boat as many of us and need to get that big conventional. Although the outfit was designed primarily for throwing bait, I have used it to toss a plug and with good results. So, perhaps this rod can meet a few of your needs and keep you busy these dreary winter months.

The Blank. The Lamiglass SB-164M is the new number for the original 1366 model; perhaps some of you will recognize it better with the old number. This blank, I felt, offered the right combination of strength and flexibility.

Guides. I originally wanted the carboloy guides, but George fairly discussed the merits of both materials. Some of his thoughts rang true and I decided that it was about time I gave the ceramic guides a try. I eventually decided on the Fuji BNHG guides (black with green ceramic).

Butt Section. I had a choice of reel seat or cork tape. Reel seats offer an advantage of ease of reel changing, but the disadvantage of corrosion. I figured this reel and rod would spend a lot of time in big surf and thus, would get a lot of underwater time. Therefore, I opted for the cork tape.

Design. Any tackle dealer can give you a set of guide spacing numbers and I have often relied upon them for spacing in the past. This year,



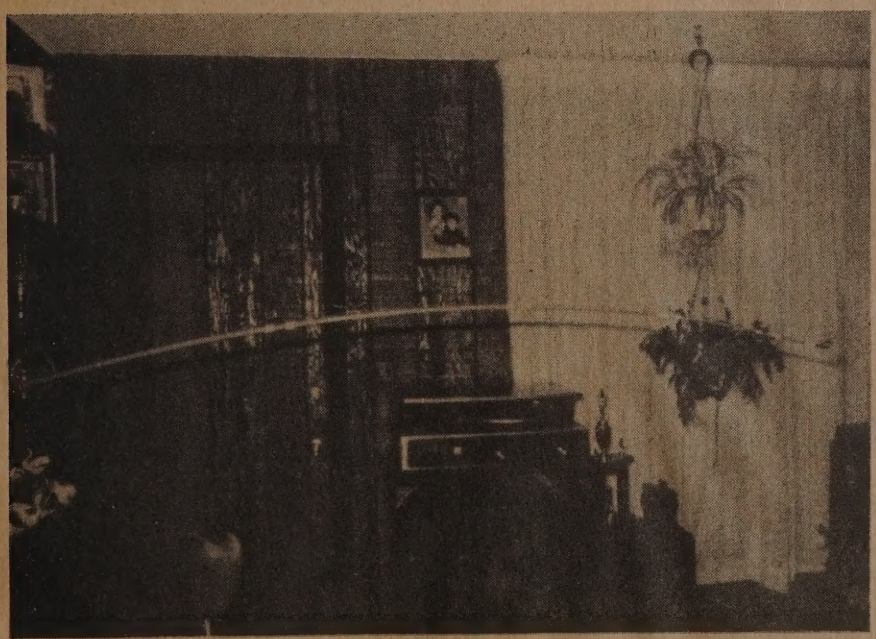
The materials needed for the job. Lamiglass blank SB 164-M, cork tape, ceramic guides and tiptop, butt cap, and foregrip.

A look at the butt section of the rod showing the distance relationships between butt cap and foregrip.

however, I decided to do it the old way and thus be able to make small movements through testing that might make the rod more compatible with my body structure. I used five guides, numbers 30, 25, 16, (2) 14, and a tiptop size 14. My experience with making this rod has taught me a few lessons which I would like to pass on to you. I believe that you can go at this project in two (at least) very distinct ways. If you want a rod that is very long and a bit whippy, you can go with design #1. This rod will allow you to fish bottom very effectively, but you may have a little trouble throwing out a very large slab of bunker or similar heavy bait. On the other hand, you can use this rod comfortably for throwing plugs as well as fishing bottom. Now, if you want a rod that is a little stiffer for throwing the large cumbersome pieces of bait, then perhaps design #2 is more of what you want. If you have a lot of patience and a flair for the experimental, you might want to build the longer one first and use it for a season. Then, if it doesn't work out the way you would like for your fishing, you can cut it down and re-do it for the next season. In either case, you have a long rod that, when combined with a tall spike, can keep your line above the breakers close to shore and thus permit a better hold of the bottom and a better chance of spotting a pick-up.

Design. Determining the spacing on the guides. As I mentioned earlier, I used an old, but tried-and-true method for determining the guide spacings. I taped a reel onto the rear of the blank in the approximate position where it would sit when fishing (for this phase I estimated position based upon comfort of feel). Next, I strung the line off the reel and threw the guides that I had taped onto the blank in positions that I thought would be close to their final positions. I tied the line to a fixed and heavy object and then I pulled back so that the blank took a good bend. Now I inspected the setup. I was looking especially for spots where the line might touch the blank when either casting or into a fish. If the line does touch, then re-arrange the positions of the guides that border the point where the line touches until the line no longer touches the blank. When you do this, keep in mind the "normal" way you might hold the rod and fight a fish so that you are essentially testing what will be real fishing conditions. Again, you can also consult with your local bait and tackle dealer for these spacings and he'll give you a complete set of numbers that he has previously worked out and found to be effective. The following are the sets of spacings for the two designs that I have used. I recommend that if you intend to use my numbers that you test them out first to see if they are compatible with your body design and fishing habit.

Tape the guides on with masking tape for guide position trials.



Testing for guide positions can be done in your house. See text for details.

Spacings: Design One. Starting at the butt end—30" from the butt end of the blank to the bottom of the foregrip (more about this later). I used a hypalon grip that is 5½" long. The distance between the front end of the foregrip and the middle of the first guide is 43"; between the middle of the first guide and the middle of the second is 26½"; between the middle of the second guide and the middle of the third is 21"; between the middle of the third guide and the middle of the fourth is 15"; between the middle of the 4th and the middle of the 5th guide is 10½", and between this fifth guide and the tiptop is 5". The total length is 157" or about 13 ft. 1½ inches, or thereabouts. A little over four inches was taken off the very tip to reduce the whippiness just a bit.

Spacings: Design Two. In this design, we take off ten inches from the 157" length of design one. Thus, if we are starting with this design from the beginning, we would take off about 14" from the tip. The butt length (30") remains the same, as does the length of the foregrip and the distance between the front end of the foregrip and the middle of the first guide (43"). The distance between the middle of the first guide and the middle of the second guide remains the same, too, at 26½", but from this point on the numbers change. The distance between the middle of the second guide and the middle of the third guide on my rod is 16", between the middle of the third guide and the middle of the fourth guide is 12", between the middle of the fourth guide and the middle of the fifth guide is 9", and the distance between

(Continued on next page.)

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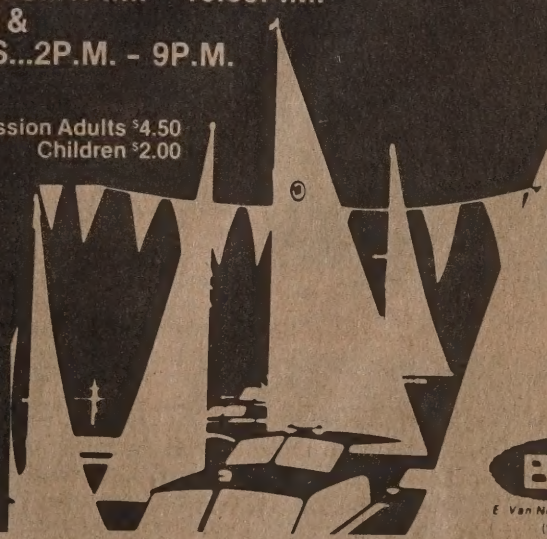
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The Butt Section. If you intend to use a reel seat, your measurement and placing of the seat will need to be much more precise than if you are designing the butt section with cork tape and no seat. You can, if you prefer, get some help on placement from your local bait and tackle dealer and perhaps these experienced people can offer some insights and suggestions about a best placement for you. If you go with a reel seat you'll need a few more grips, so you can pick them up while you're discussing your normal grip and body proportions with your tackle dealer. The way it's done, should you want to do this all yourself, is to stand with your arms hanging free at the sides of your body. Have someone measure the distance between the spaces between your thumb and index finger across the span of your abdomen. This measurement should be the distance between the end of the butt and the middle of the reel seat. The positions of the grips will then be dictated by the position of the reel seat. However, in my designs I prefer not to use reel seats and thus, after taking the measurement of the span of my hands across the front of my body, I use this as an estimate point for where I will tape the reel. I add about six inches to this number and that will be the spot where the bottom of the fore grip will go. In this way, I have a little flexibility about the position of the reel. I have found that when bait fishing I like a little larger distance between the butt end and the reel so that I can generate a bit more power into the cast. However, this greater span is a little uncomfortable when fishing with plugs because the balance is off for my body style and I find I get tired easier. Thus, I move the reel back towards the butt a little when casting artificials.

Foregrip. We are fortunate today to have a good choice of materials for our rod grips. Imagine many years ago when cork was the only choice! Cork is great stuff, but it doesn't stand up to really hard fishing and the stress of time and use will cause it to crumble. However, cork is one of the most comfortable materials for a grip. It is not cold when fishing either early or late in the season and it is soft to the touch. Neoprene grips were the state of the art awhile back. They are hard and tough, but not as soft as cork and do not ward off the feeling of cold as well either. Today we have hypalon which seems to combine many of the best traits of both cork and neoprene. Hypalon is soft, but unlike cork which is difficult and time consuming to put on the rod, hypalon is easy to put on and is very durable. George Valentine showed me how he works it onto the blank with air pressure—the grip literally glides down the blank on a cushion of air. When it's in place, you frequently don't even need glue to hold it there. This is wonderful material, and I recommend it to you over the other materials.

FISH & MARINE NEWS

BY FRED GUARDINEER

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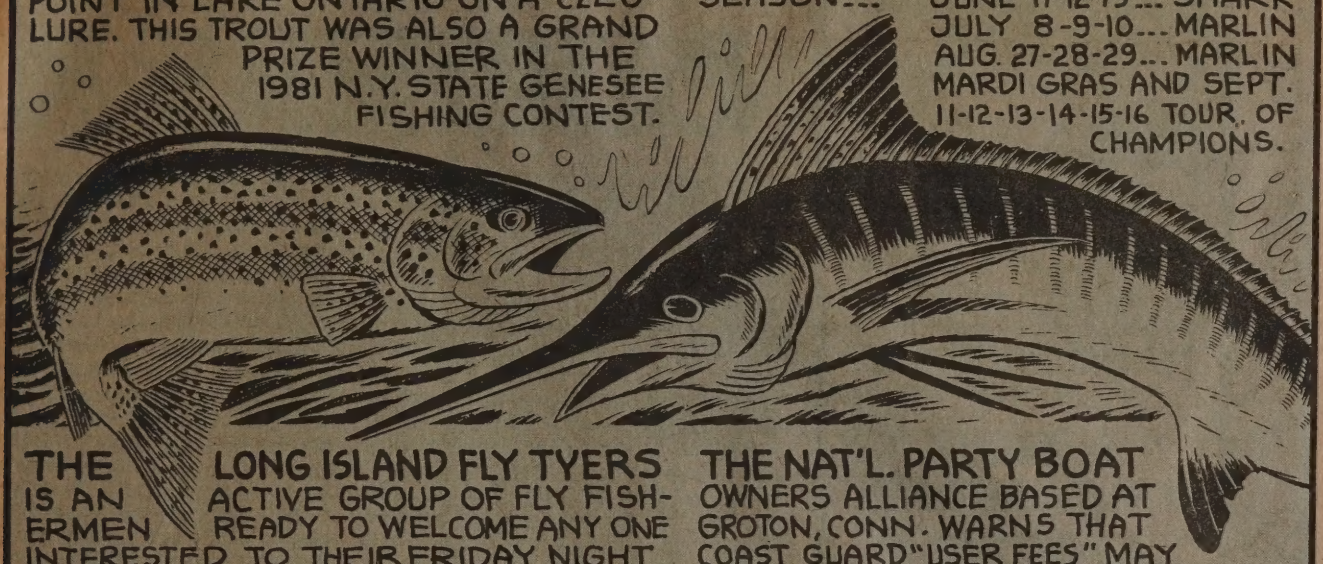

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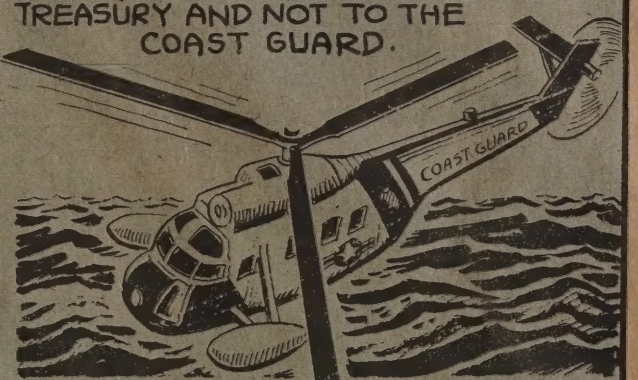

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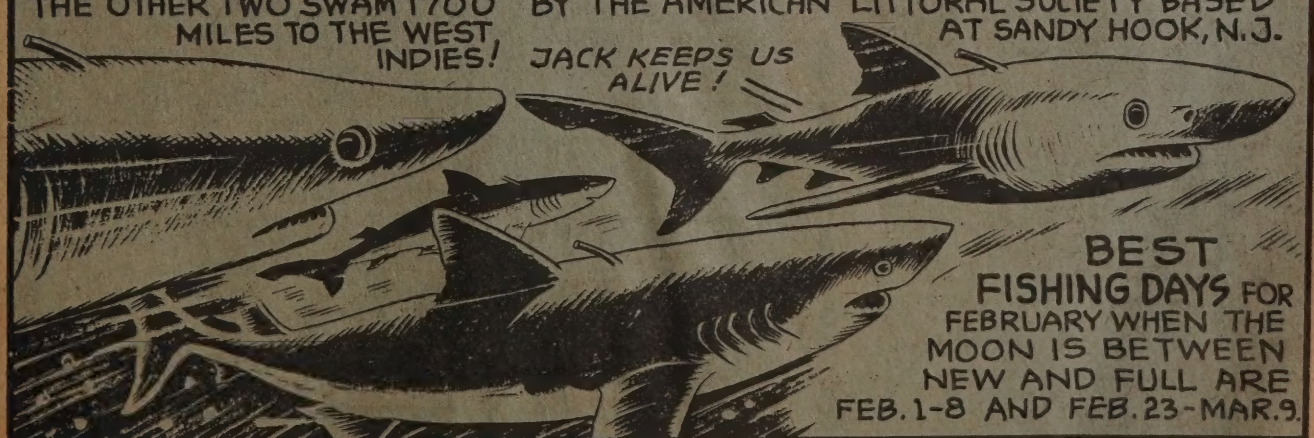

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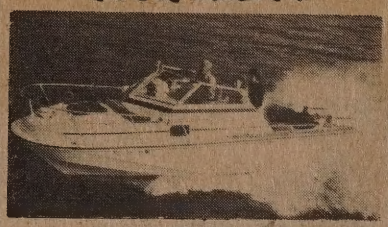

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POPPERS &

While fishing this past summer in North Carolina at Cape Hatteras, I saw some bay fishermen using a large white-and-red bobber. We were in a fleet of several small boats and only these anglers with these floats were catching with any consistency at all. The action was not very good by any means, but they managed to catch about 15 fish while other boats had to be satisfied with only 2 or 3 fish.

Red Drum Tackle had some of these floats which they called "poppers" and when we used them over the next few days, we were able to catch a fair amount of trout (weakfish) and a bunch of small bluefish.

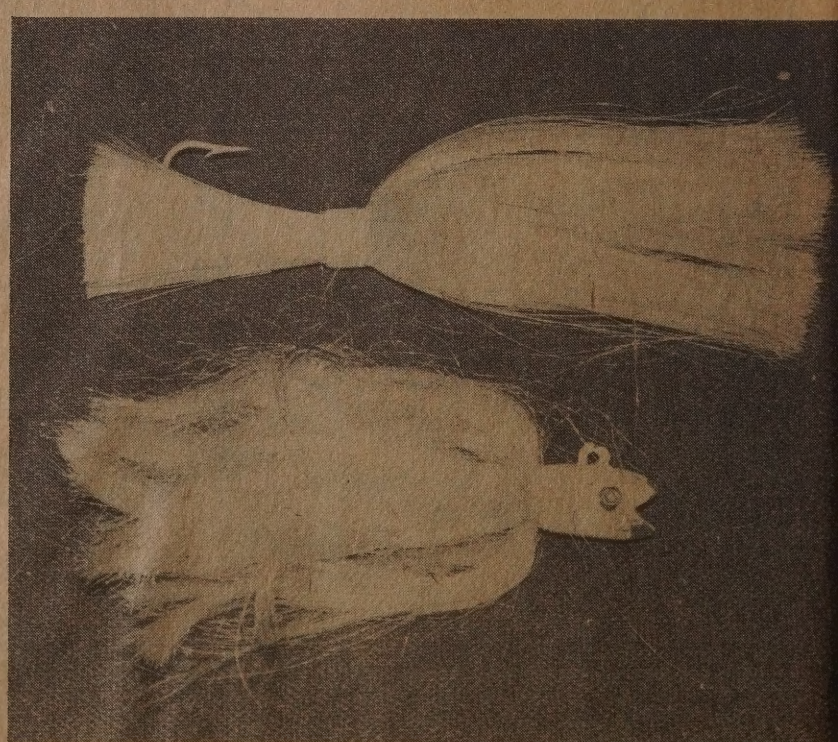
I have been unable to find these floats near my home in Pennsylvania, but I would think they might work on weakfish, flounder and snappers where I usually fish in Great Bay. Can you tell me where I can get these floats without having to travel all the way back to Hatteras?

Thanks for your help and also for a great magazine; my family and I read it from cover to cover. *John Jeroloman*

The float you describe is called a "popping float" or simply "popper" and is the most popular with sout anglers. If you visit any part o coast from Texas through Florida up to the Carolinas you will find in virtually every tackle shop. though not as popular up here i Mid-Atlantic area, they are available at many tackle shops. seen them in stores in Annap Trenton, south Jersey at Cape and many coastal shops. They us sell the smaller sizes of about 2 length, but the floats also com giant sizes of five or more inche

The faces are concave and ha hole molded completely through float through which the line passe plastic pin when pushed into the holds the line firmly in place so float will not slide up and down line as you cast or pop the float.

We've been using these floats long time on bay weaks fishing with squid strips in the Mullica R Great Bay, Barnegat Bay and se times in Long Island's Great S Bay. They work well and occasional twitch of the rod ti "pop" the float seems to attract They work on school stripers, s



"Popper" float works well on weaks, fluke, snappers, school stripers freshwater pan fish like perch and bluegills.

OCTOR ★

ARACHUTES

s and fluke when fishing with es or minnies.

fast check of three wholesale logs from the New York/New sey area showed the floats listed. t means most tackle shops can er the floats for you from their bers. Several mail order catalogs listed them. If you can't find n in Philly, you may have to wait your next visit to the coast where y tackle shops do stock these ts.

* * *

While fishing offshore this year, I rd some charter captains talking he radio about trolling a "para- e" for tunas. What is this lure where do you get it? How do you it? *Barney Oldens*

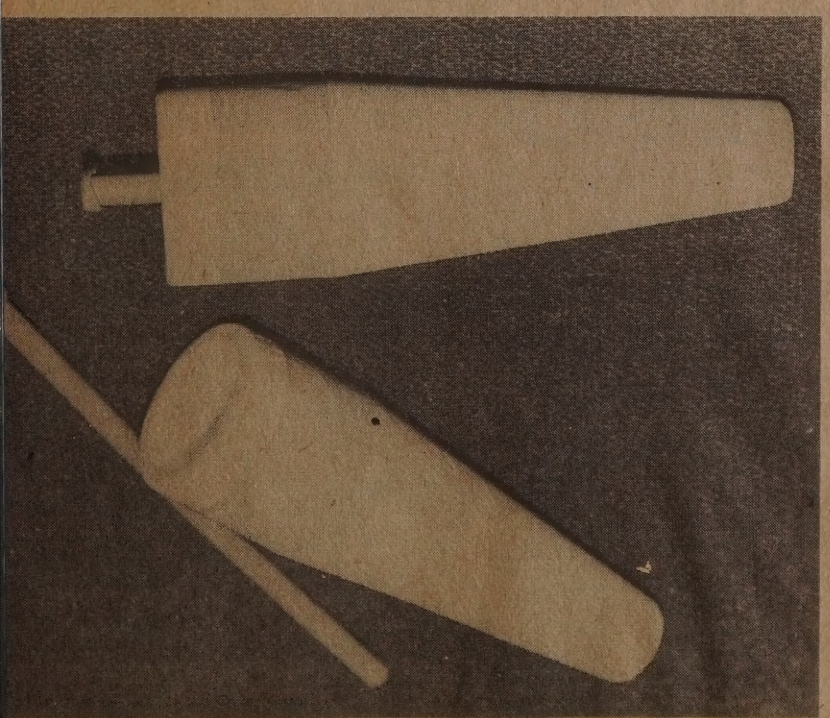
parachute is a bucktail jig tied in verse pattern so the bucktail or tic hair extend far out ahead of jig. When it is trolled, the hair s back on itself and pulsates as the r flows around the jig making it very much like a swimming d.

arachutes were most well known heir effectiveness on striped bass when trolled on wire line and jigged with a stiff rod. A strip of pork rind was always added.

Some offshore trollers are using the parachutes for school tuna, false albacore, skipjack, bonito and even yellowfin tuna and albacore. M&M Tackle in Connecticut and Lupo Tackle on Long Island both sell an original version of the parachute with an offset rigging eye. Other versions available at tackle shops that specialize in offshore trolling is the "Hawaiian Eye" a chrome-headed version drilled straight through the head so the leader lies through the center of the lure. This lure tracks better for faster offshore trolling for tuna. Similar to the Hawaiian Eye is the SeaWitch available in 1/2 oz. or 1½ oz. sizes.

They are usually trolled like most other artificial high speed lures. We've found them most effective on flat lines in close on the second or third wake.

If you have trouble finding these lures, try your local tackle shop, or a mail order catalog that specializes in big game tackle.



arachute lures are old-time reverse tied bucktails. This is bass jigging arachute. Offshore versions for high speed trolling are drilled through enter of head to track better.

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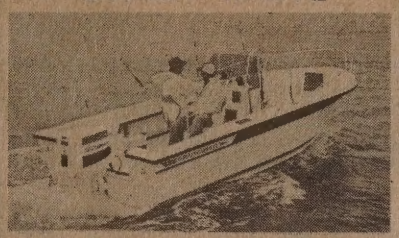

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A POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO THE AGE OLD DEBATE:

SPINNING OR CONVENTIONAL

by D.W. Anthony

"Somewhere in between the one rod for all occasions and the thousand rods of the ultimate fantasy, is reality."

There is nothing new about the debate over tackle. In fact, fishermen have probably been arguing with each other about favored tackle since the first cave man caught the first fish. No matter; there is always room for one more and I just couldn't resist throwing in my own two cents this year.

Admittedly, some of my approaches are avant garde, but at least they are mine. I'm pretty hard-headed about some of my preferences too, and although that can be negative, maybe in this case it will serve to stimulate more discussion.

Some people might say: "I use spinning and only spinning" or "I use conventional and only conventional." In my opinion anyone who says that doesn't know his or her fishing. What I'm getting at is a belief that for different conditions and in different places, different tackle should be used. That may be a very opinionated position, but one that I believe is very defensible. Now all this different tackle can get expensive, and indeed, if one carries the philosophy to extremes it can indeed get very expensive. But, are extremes necessary? We don't think so! Somewhere in-between the one rod for all occasions and the thousand rods of the ultimate fantasy, is reality.

What circumstances call for spinning and when should I use conventional? Let's start with boat fishing. I am firmly convinced that bait fishing from a boat is best done with conventional tackle. That is not to say that spinning will not work—because spinning will work. Yet, I maintain that conventional tackle offers advantages in this type of fishing. First, since bait fishing usually involves a lot of up and down of the terminal rigs and bait, hitting the clutch level or button is a lot easier than opening and closing a bail. With spinning, the line flies off the reel face without much control under these circumstances, while a gentle thumb on the spool of a conventional reel provides all the control one needs. Thus, ups and downs are easier and most tangles can be avoided. Second, conventional offers better control and feel of the baits and rigs on bottom. Nibbles are better perceived and hooks set with

Conventional tackle need not be heavy. This short, very light conventional is ideal for flounder.

Many bottom fishermen prefer spinning tackle. They argue that the fisherman has a better feel of fishing biting below.

Surf spinning rods need not be monsters. This 9' medium action rod is the type favored by many surf fishermen in Long Island Sound.

greater ease. Many fishermen balk over the lack of reeling in the line evenly across a conventional spool, and yet many of today's conventionals are equipped with level wind devices that are virtually trouble-free. That was not always the case years ago.

I cannnot support the use of conventional tackle for casting from boats. It seems to me that casting for bass, blues, and weaks from a boat is better handled by spinning gear. Casting is easier, casts are longer, and one can minimize tangles and backlashes. Now, it is only fair to point out that many of the modern conventionals (especially bait casting reels adapted to saltwater use) are virtually backlash free, and there is a new legion of saltwater baitcasters, but many anglers encounter a real problem when they have to cast very light lures. Cast distances go down, accuracy can be lost, and in general the process gets harder. Casting into a wind can also present more problems when using conventional as compared to spinning. Nonetheless, I simply can't argue with the fun and exhilaration one can have when using an ultra-light bait casting outfit for weaks.

A similar counter argument can be raised for using spinning tackle when fluke fishing. In general, I prefer and most fishermen use, conventional tackle when fluking. However, under the right conditions the use of a light spinning outfit can be sheer joy. What are these "right" conditions? When I go fluking, I bring along a light spinning outfit and if the winds are light, there are a lot of fluke, and they are feeding eagerly, I'll tie on a small bucktail, add a strip of squid and toss that bait out. I drag the lure along the bottom and make it jump off bottom from time to time with a flick of my wrist. Fluke really go bonkers. It's great fun!

I also believe that diamond jigging is best done with conventional tackle. Again, the feel and control provided by conventional tackle makes the job easier. If the technique is easier, the chances are that you'll catch more fish. With spinning gear there needs to be too much hand switching and exaggerated movements. All this takes time and this time can interfere with proper lure presentation. Also, in diamond jigging you usually need a rod with a stiffer tip to handle the heavy jig and facilitate setting the hook. Most boat-sized spinning rods lack that necessary backbone in the tip. Sure, you can catch fish diamond jigging using a spinning outfit, but it may not be the best approach.

One of my pet peeves involves using spinning tackle for flounder fishing. The only other type of bottom fishing that involves as much or more up and down of baits and rigs is porgy fishing and my opinion on that is similar. How I have tried the spinning while flounder fishing. Yet, no matter how often or hard I try, the end result is always the same. I get frustrated and aggravated, the spinning rod gets pushed off to the side and out comes my trusty light conventionals.

As dedicated as I am to conventional for most types of boat fishing, just the opposite is true for surf fishing. I am convinced that spinning tackle is the superior choice when surf fishing using artificials that are cast out and retrieved, again and again. Although the equipment is bigger, the technique is most similar to boat casting with artificials in that one casts out and retrieves again and again. There is a fatigue factor to be considered. Even under ideal conditions with a practiced conventional caster at the controls, one becomes fatigued faster using conventional tackle. There are two reasons for this I believe: one is the extra concentration required when working conventionals. More things can go wrong, so one needs to concentrate just a little harder. Second, the balance of a large conventional outfit is different than spinning. A large surf spinning outfit puts less strain on the wrists and forearms because the reel hangs down. Thus, the rod shaft supports much of the weight of the reel. This weight support is spread along some of the length of the rod and is transferred to the angler over a greater distance. In the end, the entire upper body handles the weight of rod and reel. This may not seem like much, but after three or four hours and hundreds of casts, it adds up. The conventional reel on top of the rod cannot seek a natural position via gravity, but must be held in its position by the wrists and fingers. The hands are positioned differently, too. In spinning, one hand cranks and the other holds the rod shaft at right angles and the wrist of that hand is straight (or virtually so). When using conventional, one hand cranks and the other supports the rod shaft from below which means that the wrist must turn and bend under the reel

(Continued on next page.)

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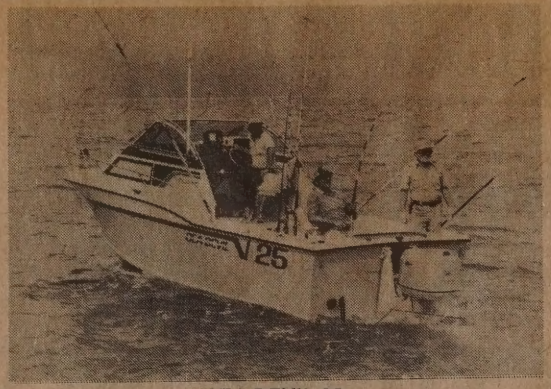

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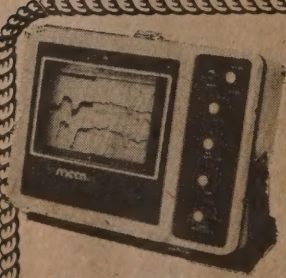

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and shaft. This position is far more tiring.

On the other hand, bait fishing does not require that the fisherman constantly hold the rod. Instead, the rig is cast out and most often the rod is placed in a holder. The fatigue factor thus does not exist. Yet, there is an advantage to the conventional in baitfishing in my opinion. The advantage is similar to sinker bouncing in a boat. When fishing spinning with bait rigs in the surf, the fisherman is well advised to loosen the drag while the rod rests in the spike. Not everyone does this, but sooner or later they lose a rod to a fast-fleeing fish. If the rod and reel sit in the holder and the reel's drag is loose, it means that when a hit is perceived the fisherman will have to tighten down on the drag when he decides to set the hook. However, he is not in a position to know how tight he has set this drag since the setting is made under pressure. Too loose and the fish can get slack and be lost; too tight and the running fish may break the line or pull the hook out. With conventional, the angler simply engages the clutch—the drag has been previously and precisely set. The result is less guesswork and more fish landed. In addition, with the clutch disengaged and the clicker on, a pick-up can be heard at a distance even with a significant wind obscuring sound. The sound of the clicker can be better than a stiff neck from looking at a tiptop all night or day. I only have one big conventional surf stick and therefore, when I bait fish two rods, one will have to be a spinning. I tell you, if I did more baitfishing, I'd build another big conventional so I would have no need for the spinning under these conditions.

Of course, much of this is personal preference and following what a majority of experts believes to be best will not guarantee more fish, or any at all for that matter. However, most fishermen agree that we should strive to get the most out of our fishing and the way to get more fun out of it is to make it easier and less tiring. In that way we can concentrate on the fishing part of things. Nothing is set in concrete and no matter how strong one's opinions are, one should always be willing to try something new.

Now back to an original question. Few of us can afford to have a thousand rods, but we need more than one. What might be a good formula. If we assume that a fisherman fishes both boat and surf, then the following tackle might be a good mix:

An ultra-light spinning outfit; a light conventional boat outfit; a medium conventional boat outfit; 9' light action surf spin stick; 11' surf spinning stick; and 11'' to 13' conventional stick.

Well, do you agree or has your experience taught you different lessons. If so, write and tell me about them and we'll pass them on to other readers.

— ROD BUILDING SERIES —

MOUNTING REEL SEATS & FINISHING TOUCHES ON HANDLE CONSTRUCTION

Part Five — *by C. Boyd Pfeiffer*

Rods such as spinning, popping, surf and boat rods consist of a rear handle or grip, reel seat, and a fore grip. As a result, the first step in rod construction is building the handle or rear grip as covered in last week's article. Mounting the reel seat is next. It must be mated neatly to the handle to make for a good professional finish. This isn't hard, but it does take some care to get the reel seat mounted concentrically on the blank.

First, choose a reel seat suitable for the rod. Aluminum and chrome plated brass are both standard, but Fuji now has an "FPS" graphite-resin reel seat that is more comfortable for cold weather fishing.

Reel seats of one style are often available in several sizes. Anglers occasionally make the mistake of choosing a reel seat relative to blank and rod size, rather than comfort. This typically happens when anglers making thin graphite rods choose a reel seat of a smaller diameter than they would for an equivalent glass rod of thicker diameter. While this does make for an attractive rod, it is often less comfortable to fish and might cramp your hand over a long day of casting.

To mount the reel seat, you will have to have a spacer of some sort between the blank diameter and the reel seat. These are called bushings, spacers or shims, and can be built up in a number of ways. First, mark off on the rod blank the length of the reel seat so that the bushing will be the length of the reel seat. This will be immediately above the rear grip, so that you get a good smooth transition from the handle to the reel seat. Bushings can be made of cord wrapped around the rod blank, masking tape wrapped in several narrow rings in this space, paper tape wrapped around the blank, fiber or cork bushings available from component supply stores.

In all cases, the bushing must be secured to the blank. Cord wraps, cork bushings and fiber bushing must be glued in place with liberal amounts of a good waterproof glue. In all

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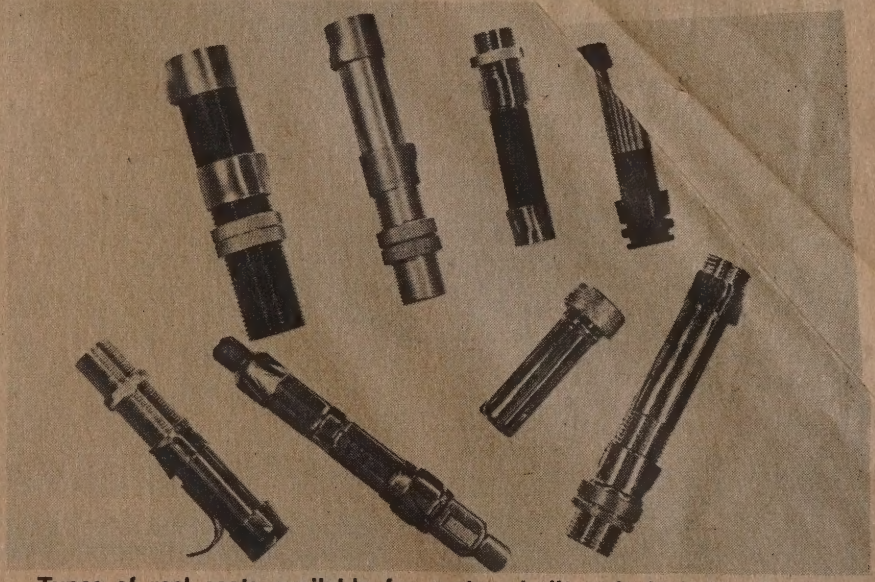
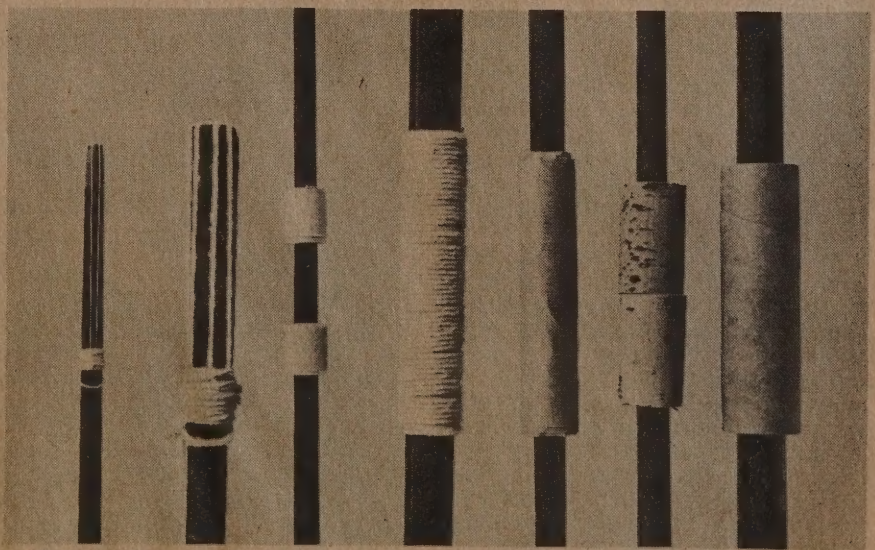


Types of reel seats available for custom built rods include slip-over spinning reel seats, fly rod reel seats with wood inserts, chrome-plated brass for saltwater use, trigger reel seats for popping rods and plate type reel seats which are wrapped in place on the rod.



Types and methods of bushings for mounting reel seats and tiptops. Left to right, methods for shimming with thread or cord in the longitudinal axis for tiptops: two examples—bushings of masking tape, bushing of wrapped cord, bushing of wrapped paper, bushing of cork bushings, and bushing of fiber bushing.

cases, be sure to measure the bushing material against the inside diameter of the reel seat as you progress. When complete, the reel seat should fit smoothly on the bushing with enough play for good gluing, but not loose enough to come apart later.

One other possibility of filling this space is to use cork rings such as are used for making rod handles and to glue these on the rod blank, either in a cylinder or spaced apart. Once the glue is cured, use a file to size the cork into a diameter to fit the reel seat. It won't be necessary to sand them smooth, since they won't show and the rough finish will hold glue better for a firmer bond of the reel seat.

There is one additional possibility of gluing reel seats in place. Some pre-formed cork grips come with a built-in bushing at the forward end of the butt grip and the rear end of the forward grip to make for built-in bushings to fit certain sizes of reel seats. In some cases, these sizes might not be exact, but are close enough that a little sanding will provide a good fit.

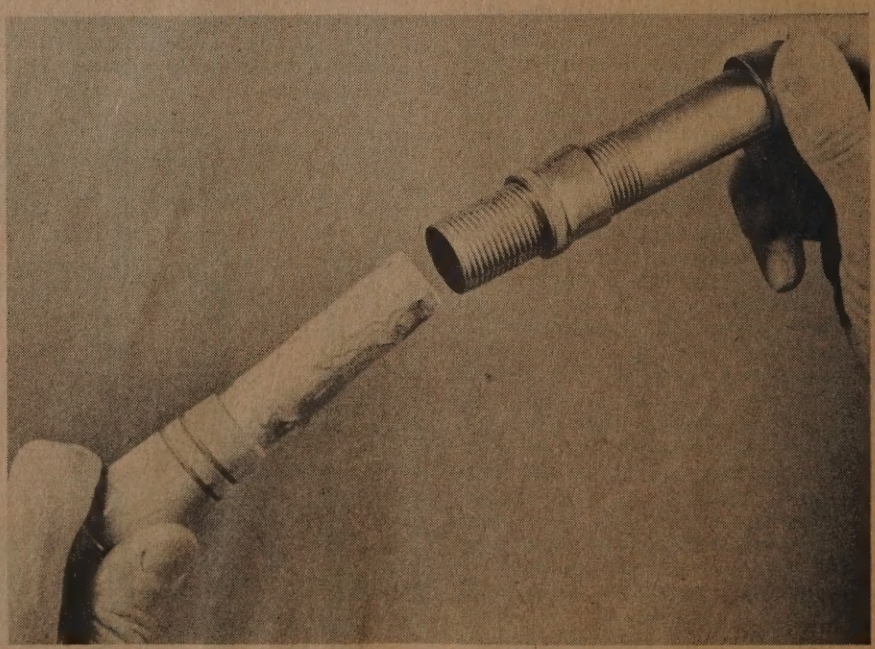
One problem with mounting the reel seat, or with mounting the fore grips above the reel seat once the seat is in place, is the glue that oozes out as the reel seat is pushed in place. This glue can get into the threads on the barrel of the reel seat or on the cork and make cleanup difficult. One professional tip to prevent this is to use 3/4" or 1" masking tape and tape the end of the cork grip and both ends of the reel seat. Cover completely with several turns of tape. As the glue comes out between the grip and the reel seat it is easy to wipe up, then remove the tape for a clean, precise fit without any oozing glue. Use the same procedure when mounting a foregrip against a reel seat to prevent this problem.

While the above does allow for precise reel seat mounting for most rods, there are some situations where some modifications are required. Light spinning rods, for example, often are fitted with spinning rod rings in place of a reel seat. These rings slide up and down on a cylindrical cork grip, so that the reel can be placed anywhere you want. The rings hold the reel foot securely to the rod.

This really requires that the rod grip be made from cork rings, or from a pre-formed cork grip especially designed for this purpose. The grip usually has a slight swelling at each end to prevent loss of the aluminum rings. To make this, mount the cork grip as described in last week's article using a pre-formed cork grip or cork rings. These pre-formed cork grips usually come in two parts so that the lower part can be glued on, the rings added, and the upper part glued in place. To make it out of cork rings, glue on all the cork rings except for the last two corks at the upper end of the grip. Shape the cork grip to a smooth, even cylindrical diameter that will match the inside diameter of the spinning rod rings. Place the rings on, taking care that any taper or swagging to hold the reel foot in the proper direction. Then glue the last two cork rings on, allow to cure overnight and sand and shape to size. It is important when making this type of reel seat-handle combination to keep the handle diameter large enough so that the rings are snug on the cork. The reel will still fit on. Too loose a fit will mean that the reel might not be held tightly in place.

One alternative to making do with the rings (which some anglers do not like because of the possibility of reel slippage on the handle) is to use a regular reel seat, but to reduce its weight by shortening it. If contemplating this, first hold the reel or reels that you will use up against the ends of the reel seat hoods spaced to allow the reel foot to go on. Then use tape to

Adding a reel seat to a spinning rod with several cork bushings under the reel seat. Bushings have been glued in place and will, in turn, be glued to the reel seat.



Glue has been smeared on the wood recess to hold this boat rod reel seat on this wood handle. Many boat rod handles come with fittings to take standard size reel seats. Tape over the end of the wood handle and threads of reel seat, as outlined in the text, would help prevent glue from oozing out between the two parts when they are pushed together.

mark where to cut the reel seat. Scr
the lock nuts out of the way and
lightly clamp the end to be discarded
in a vise. Support the other end of the
reel seat and cut on the mark with a
fine blade hacksaw. After cutting off
all the excess threaded barrel, use a
power sander or sanding block to
smooth any rough edges. Obviously,
this procedure will leave a raw edge of
aluminum, but there is a solution for
this also. One way to hide this is to
use a permanent felt tip pen of the
me color as the anodized reel seat
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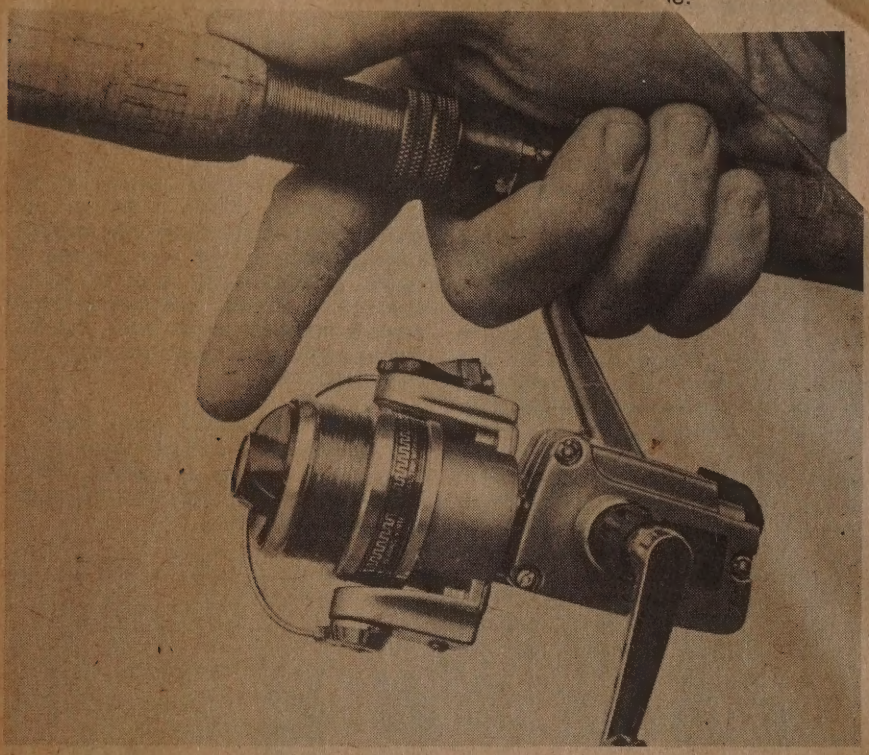


Reel seats on most rods can be mounted in either direction. This spinning rod has a down locking reel seat with the threaded barrel at the upper end on the rod.

Tiptops can be glued easily onto rod blanks at the same time reel seats are added. Make sure that the tiptop lines up with the hoods on the reel seat and use a heat set cement melted with an alcohol lamp, as shown here.

It used to be that spinning rod anglers could not get skeletal reel seat in which an insert of cork or wood was used, but would have to use the above procedure to cut up barrels and hoods to make their own. For the last several years, however, skeletal seats have been available, by which wood inserts or cork can be used between the hoods, just as in some expensive fly rod seats. In this case, you will usually want to make you own insert. To mount this type of reel seat, first mount one end with a bushing, as previously described. Then wrap the hood with masking tape, add sufficient cork rings for the insert, and allow the glue to cure overnight. Sand and shape the cork rings to the diameter of the reel seat, add another bushing and add the remainder of the reel seat.

Fly rod reel seats also require some thought, depending upon what you are trying to get and what rod blank you will mount it on. First, any aluminum barrel reel seat will fit any fly blank using the bushing methods mentioned herein. Many new reel seats are available, however, with wood inserts. These, such as the Rodon and Ed Gaudal seats, usually have a 3/8" hole drilled into the wood insert. As a result, while they can be reamed or drilled out to fit larger blanks, care must be taken to avoid splitting or damaging the wood insert. As a result, they are best on light glass or graphite blanks. In these cases, you might have to build up the blank with bushings to fit the reel seat as described above. Avoid wood insert fly rod reel seats on large diameter blanks, since even careful drilling would make for a very thin wall that would, in effect, weaken the reel seat and might cause problems later.

Most rods, however, use the techniques described above. Popping rods, for example, use the same techniques for mounting except that a trigger reel seat is used in place of the slip-over barrel type used on spinning rods. Surf rods are usually thick enough so that a bushing is often not required. Some seats, like the Fuji FPS graphite come in enough sizes so that it is possible to get an exact fit without bushings, or with only a turn or two of tape.

One final consideration before mounting any reversible fly rod or spinning type of reel seat is whether you want the reel seat up locking or down locking. It is often a personal preference with spinning rods; while with fly rods, the up-locking reel seat will give you a slight permanent "extension butt."

Once the reel seat is mounted, and a fore grip (if required) mounted on spinning and casting or popping rod blanks, the rest is only a matter of picking guides and wrapping them in place to complete the rod.

NEXT WEEK: Guide wraps—Preparation, Some Basics and Some Variations.

A BETTER MARKER BUOY

by Ken Gerhardt

How many times have we all said, "Damn, I wish I had a buoy." It could be you're over a pod of fluke, or cod, or weakies or whatever, but if you don't have a buoy you can't keep track of the fish. Most of us wrap some mono around a bleach jug, tie a 6 oz. sinker on it and let it go at that. Sometimes they work, and sometimes they give you horrendous tangles.

The buoy(s) that we're going to make is almost tangle-free, automatic in operation and has high visibility. We'll make an inshore and offshore version. Both are similar in construction, so we'll detail the inshore buoy with notes on the offshore.

Photo 1: Material needed is as follows—1 net float (6" long), a 12" piece of 3/4" dowel, an 8" piece of 1" aluminum tubing; some braided nylon or dacron line, some yellow paint and a large snap swivel.

Photo 2: Lay out pencil lines around the float 1/2" each side of center line. There's usually a ridge which makes this easier. Apply vinyl or masking tape to the outside of these lines.

Photo 3: With a hand saw or hacksaw, carefully cut into the float on an angle towards the center on both sides. Flip out triangular chunk when you're finished. It should look something like Photo 3.

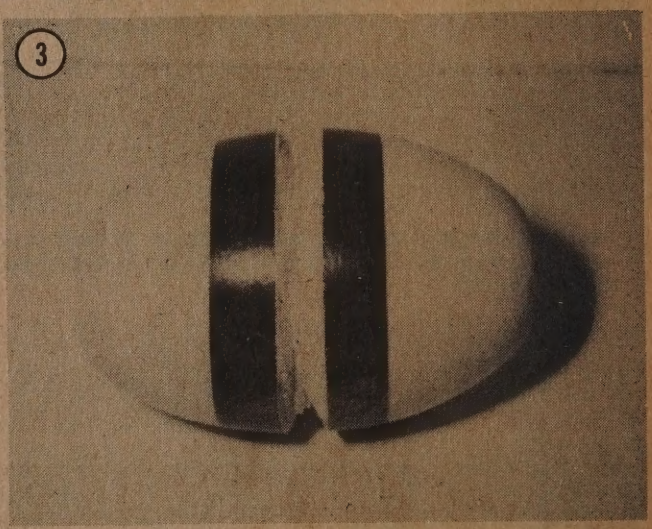
Photo 4: Cut a piece of aluminum tubing about 8" long. Crimp 1" in a vise. Drill 1/4" hole in crimped section. Fill halfway with molten lead, as this is our "anchor."

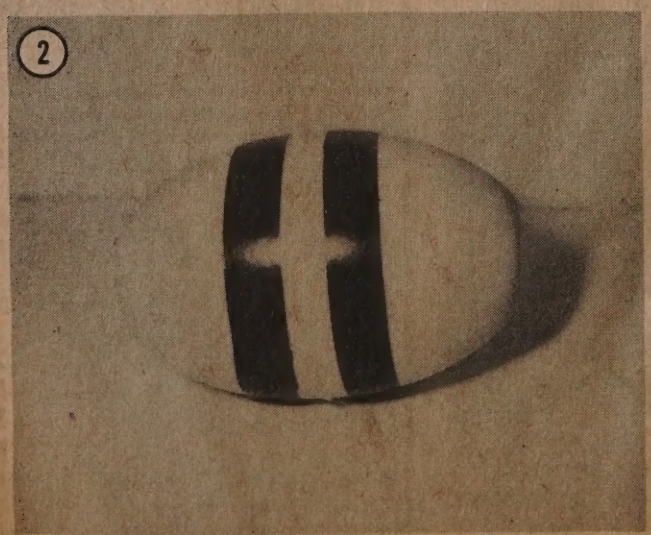
Photo 5: Insert dowel into float leaving 4" on bottom side of float. This is inserted into the top half of our anchor, neatly storing it for future use.

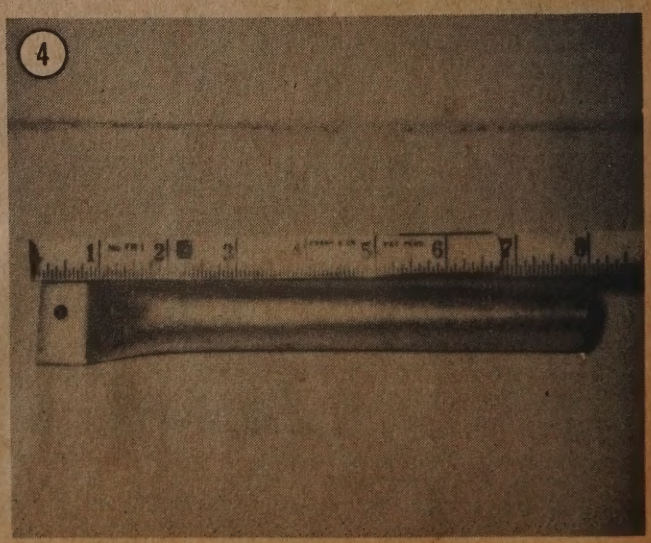
Photo 6: Wind 25' or 30' of braided line on the float and tie a large snap swivel on the end. Run the snap through the 1/4" hole and, presto—our float is finished.

Photo 7: If one wants a larger float for offshore work, obtain a lobster pot float. Some dealers handle orange colored floats. If you can get one of these, it does away with painting. Proceed with the above-mentioned steps to make the larger buoy. Put 50' more line than the depth you intend to fish on the buoy.

To finish either buoy if white, dip in a can of yellow paint or spray with fluorescent orange or yellow. Paint the dowel red for easy identification and you're all set.







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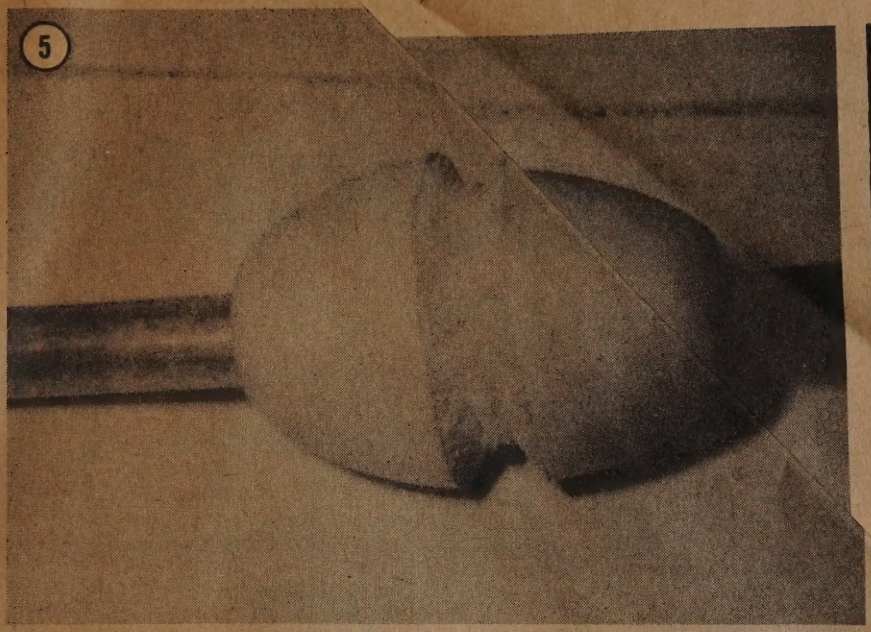

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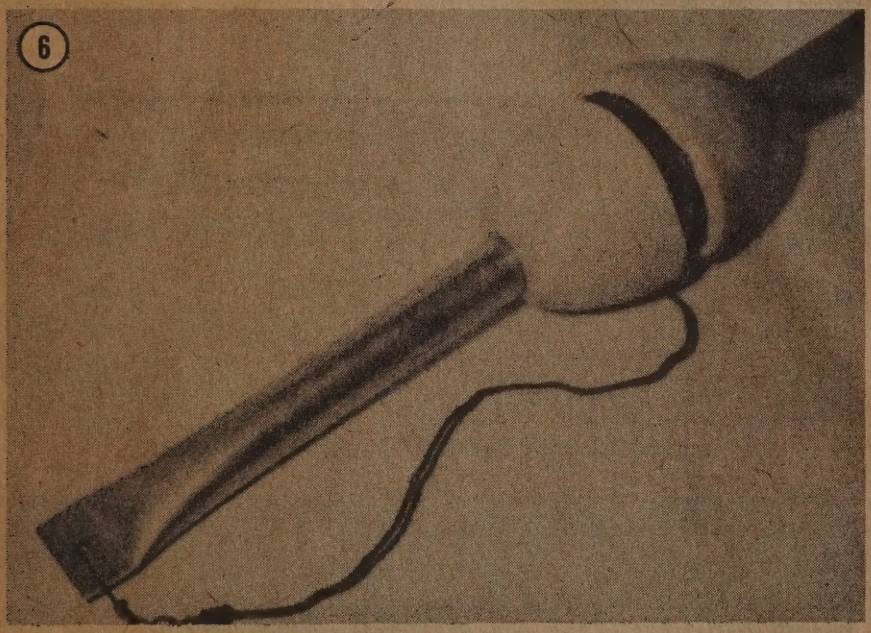

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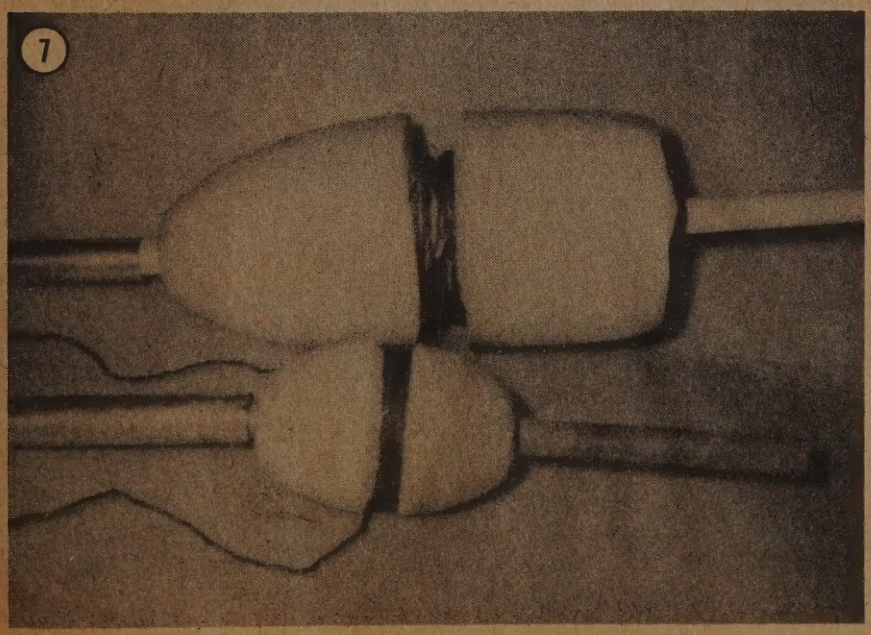

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HOW-TO SPECIAL:

HOOK DISGORGER

by Don Mondolio

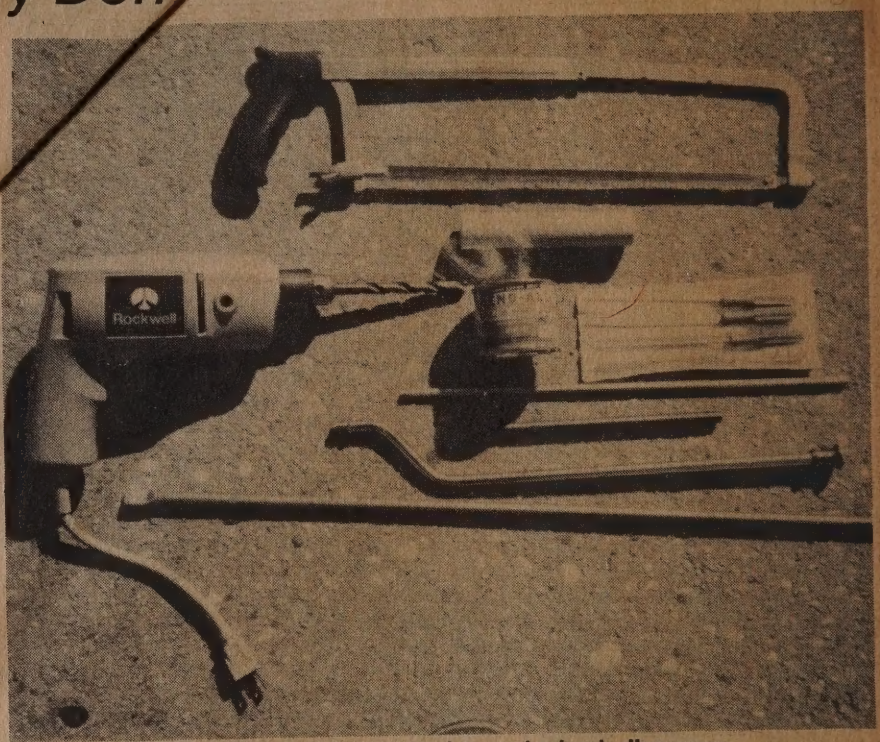
There are various designs, and styles of hook removers, disgorgers, etc., on the market—many of which are excellent and offer good hook removing qualities. Occasionally, new types of designs are marketed in the many tackle shops suggesting that the subject of hook removal is a popular challenge to fishing tackle manufacturers. Some are not much more than gadgets with many moving parts which may hang up when used in a saltwater environment. These moving parts are attacked by corrosion and seldom provide a year or more of use if not cleaned and taken care of properly. The old standard design that is used on folding camp knives and other typically advertised extractors is more than adequate for most hook removal situations.

Being a "tackle tinkerer" and isolated from fishing during the cold winter months, I decided to improve on the old standard design. I decided to keep it simple and economical to make for obvious reasons. Even the most unmechanically inclined person can make one with little effort.

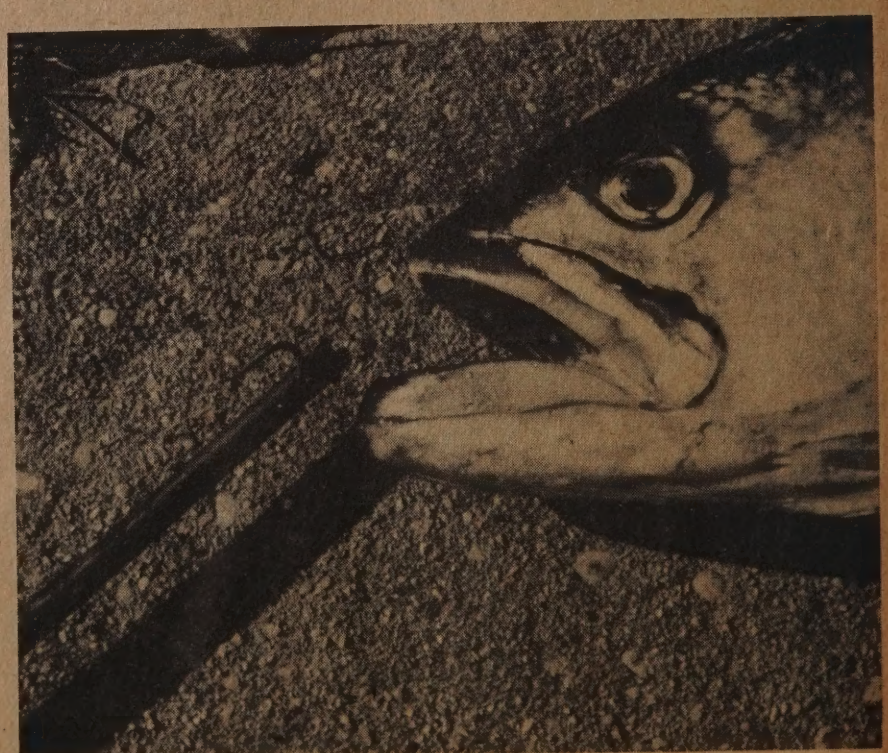
In order to remove the hook from the mouth of a fish with this simple and effective tool, you push and twist the hook loose. By alternately pulling on the attached line while the hook is grabbed by the disgorger, the hook is easily removed.

A diagram for correct insertion of the disgorger tube over the hook is shown in my sketch. If the hook is isolated down in the stomach or throat area of the fish, and cannot be seen, it is wiser to cut, or disconnect the line rather than waste time trying to remove the hook.

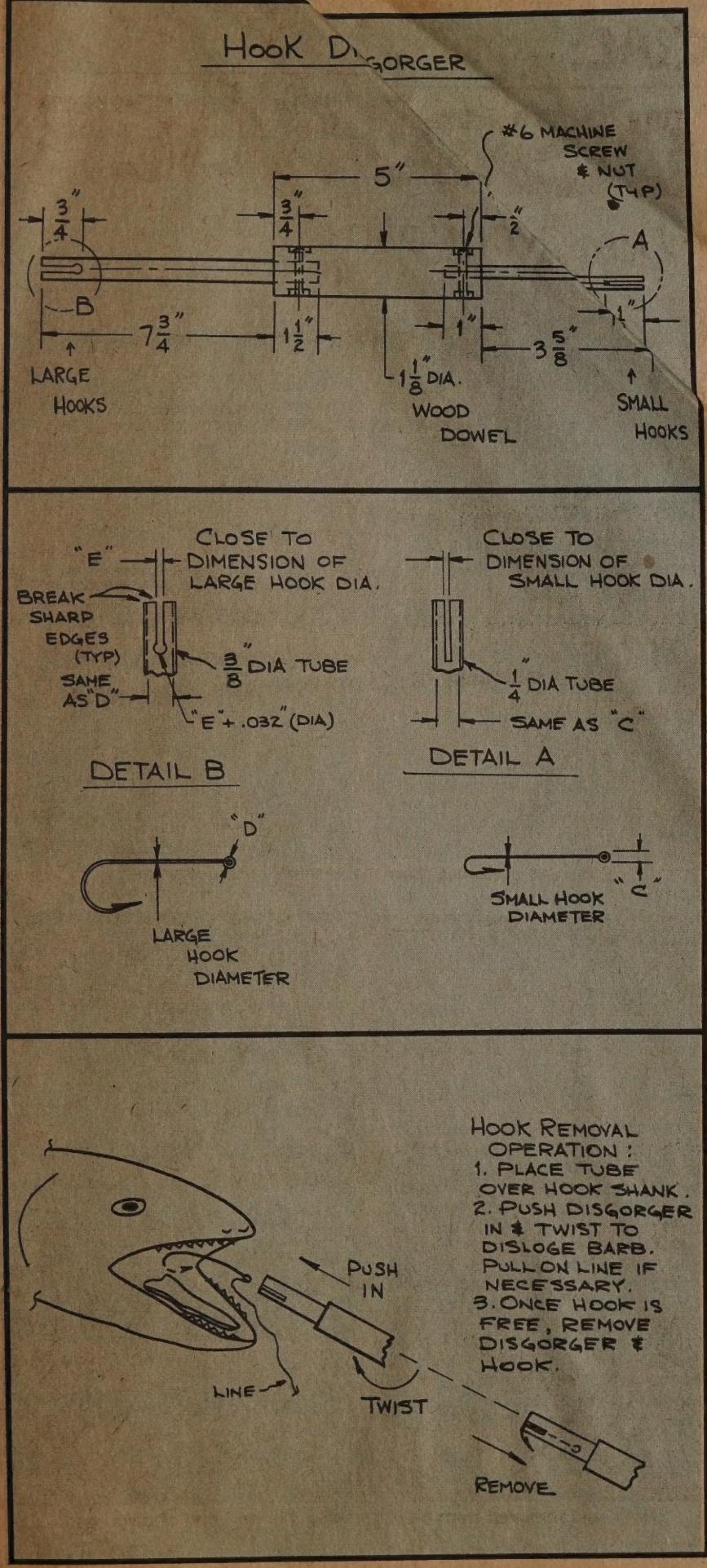
The particular hook disgorger I constructed is made from two very simple, economical parts: a tube, and a wood dowel. Once this material is obtained, one can construct the disgorger in approximately one weekend's time. The wood dowel (or discarded broomstick handle section) is cut and drilled per the sketch. The tube should be of a material such as stainless steel, steel, hard brass, or galvanized pipe. Because of the forces encountered by the tube against the steel hook during removal, a hard material is strongly suggested. Also a corrosion resistant finish would be desirable, but not absolutely necescary. Stainless would be my first choice for this reason, followed by plated brass and galvanized steel. To obtain tube material, first shop



Tools and materials required to make hook disgorger.



Hook just removed from bluefish using "large" end of disgorger.



around your house for some discarded material from lamps, plumbing, electrical fixtures, etc. If none are found, purchase material from your local hardware, plumbing, or lighting supply house. As a tip: the local lighting supply house sells a hard brass-plated tubular lamp stem (approximately 3/8" diameter) for a dollar and change that can be used for material stock. Remember to avoid soft tubular material or your time will be wasted. Attaching hardware can also be purchased from the same sources and again, try to obtain stainless or cadmium plated screws and nuts for best results.

All that is required now is a sharp hacksaw, drill, file, and sandpaper for construction. The slots are cut as per sketch dimensions. I find that cutting the slots under-size and filing to exact dimension allows easier controlling of the dimension. The hole on the large tube can now be drilled through at the end of the slot as shown. Finally, file the raw edges at the tube end to remove burrs. As an alternate design, two handles can be made, each with a different size tube, rather than inserting the two tube sizes into one. Even though the two handle design appears large and clumsy, I find it handier to use because of the various hook sizes encountered. Once the two end slots are made, drill the dowel at each end. Before final assembly, epoxy the tubes into the dowel for added strength. Insert the tubes one at a time and drill at right angles to the tubes into the dowel surface, through the metal tube and again through the dowel completely. Use a size drill bit for this operation that is similar to the attaching screw diameter. After these holes are drilled, counter-bore or counter-sink the dowel at each end of the drilled screw hole; this is accomplished to completely submerge the screw head and nut below the dowel's outer surface. Once the screw and its fastening nut are assembled, a plastic wood filler compound is used to seal the counter-bored hole in four places. One alternate would be to use heat shrink tubing around the dowel handle.

For most hook removal operations, I feel that two basic size tube slots will be sufficient. For example, mackerel, flounder, porgies, and blacks will be caught on small size hooks; while blues, bass, large weakfish, and fluke will be caught on larger hooks. The basic idea is to make the slot in one tube as close to the larger size diameter and the slot in the smaller tube as close to the smaller hook diameter category.

This hook disgorger is of particular advantage when used on toothy fish such as bluefish, weakfish, or fluke and can help avoid the risk of injury.

These winter days have a way of keeping us indoors and idle, anxiously awaiting the new fishing season. An indoor project such as this would not only pass the time, but set the mood for the oncoming season.

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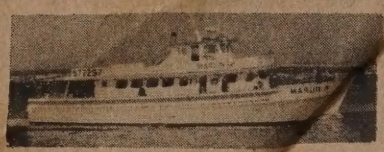

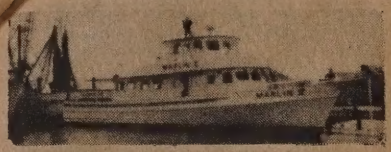

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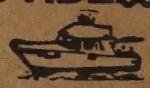

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EDITORIAL: Striped Bass Hearing

(Continued from page 2.)

policies, they seldom come up with sensible, reasonable, and worthwhile counter-proposals. This type of an approach, by a very small minority of fishermen, undermines the legitimate efforts of those who seek credible solutions through compromise, patience, and hard work!

Our position was made clear in our Editorial of December 3, 1981. We object strongly to a number of points in the proposal and we offered alternatives. These briefly are:

1. A more meaningful minimum size—perhaps 19''-20'' total length.
2. A longer closed season.
3. A commercial license in excess of $100—perhaps $500.
4. Control harvests of **both** commercial and recreational fishermen.

Unfortunately, not as much was accomplished at the public hearing as we would have liked. Much more could have been done if there were five hundred fishermen present instead of the 130 that did attend. The entire psychology of the event would have been different and like the bluefish hearings of a few years ago, fishermen would have left an entirely different impression. If you were DEC or a legislator, what would you think about that turnout? That most fishermen didn't care about striped bass management! Now, we know that isn't the case. So what can we do about it. We are confident that the DEC will submit this proposal with few, if any, changes to the Legislature. It will be up to us to amend that bill once it hits the floor. We are already lining up political support for such amendments. It is our hope that these amendments will turn a poor proposal into one that is a solid beginning towards meaningful management of striped bass in New York State..It will be during the legislative battle that we will again need your help to achieve this goal. We'll keep you informed of developments. Keep that pen warmed up people, because we'll have to ask you to use it for five minutes in the months ahead.

William A. Muller

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MAN GRABS HAWK

Bob Amato of Whitestone, N.Y. is the winner of the Unimetrics "Sea Hawk 14" V.H.F. Radio (courtesy of Shane's Marine of Island Park and Babylon) raffle that was held at the Long Island Fisherman booth at the recent New York Boat Show.
Hopefully, we'll be holding similar free raffles at boat shows in the future.

Fishing Reports

by Stu Miller

MONTAUK

Captain Paul Forsberg, Jr. of the **Viking Star** was super excited when we spoke with him Sunday night regarding the week's codfishing. Paul said that this weekend saw what had to be the fiercest codfishing action since at least 1976. While Wednesday saw catches of 5-6 cod a man, Saturday's body count for the 30 men was 287 cod. Amongst these was a catch for George Steininger of Massapequa of 23 cod. James Stotz of The Bronx also accounted for 23 cod, while Dennis O'Connell of Centereach rang the bell with 25 fish. Centereach angler Alex Mickaciger scored with 20 cod. Wow! Sunday was another bonanza trip at Cartwright with 50 men with 15 anglers bagging up with 218 cod and the boat returning early to the dock at 2:30PM. Fish averaged 4-10 lbs. and pool fish ranged in the mid-20s. Fares had a few small pollack also. The cod were full of sand eels and all fish were caught on clam. Captain Paul Sr., with the **Viking Starship** out of Key West, Florida for the winter is still taking a good toll on yellowtails and mutton snappers. Paul says he still has plenty of room on the boat for his trips and those coming down from our area can stay on the boat free of charge.

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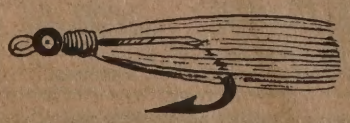

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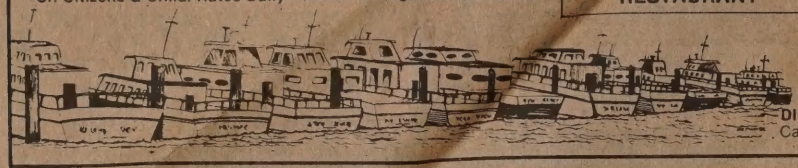

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Captain Speedy Hubert of the **Speedy VI** reports a decent Saturday of cod fishing with 22 fares pulling 50 cod, fish running 5-9 lbs. with the pool fish hitting 27 lbs. Sunday was a little slower though fares still had a decent catch of 20 cod. The boat is fishing open bottom on a weekend only schedule right now.

FREEPORT

Captain Billy Lindroth was running the **Capt. Al** while his dad is on vacation, had some decent codfishing this week to brag about. Wednesday saw Bruce Rothstein with a 30 lb. cod. On Thursday, George from Sheepshead Bay and pal Richie had 17 cod between them including a 38 lb. pool winner. Friday saw Bobby Parker of Howard Beach hit paydirt with a 50 lber., while Bill Sharkey of Bayside hoisted a 32 lber. On Saturday's trip, Robert Rojas of Glen Cove moaned and groaned and finally brought up a 55 lb. codfish. He also had 11 other fish that day. Sheepshead Bay angler Mel Goldman made his car trunk closer to the ground with a 28 and a 38 lber. while Morris Buchan of Floral Park, a member of the Tight Liners Fishing Club bagged a 32 lber. Also on Sunday's trip Bob Matus hung a 44½ lber. which took the pool, plus 8 other cod. Bill says there are a lot of 2-7 lbers. showing, which is very encouraging and indicates very strongly that the 200 mile limit is really showing some results for the local cod fishery. Catches were mixed with fish 3-15 lbs. Bill says fares also had hooks straightened, indicating many big cows still down there, so don't screw those drags down super tight. Action has been both on wrecks and open bottom.

Captain Jimmy of the **Super Spray II** on Saturday had a fair catch of cod, mixed sizes up to 20 lbs., fishing both open bottom and wrecks. Jimmy also feels that the showing of a lot of smaller fish is a very good sign for continued cod catches in years to come.

Captain Richie of the **Starstream II** sailed both Saturday and Sunday. Saturday's trip for 16 people saw 60 fish on the deck and Sunday's trip saw 35 cod brought up. Fish are mixed sizes up to 15 lbs.

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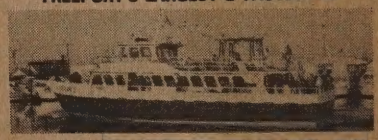
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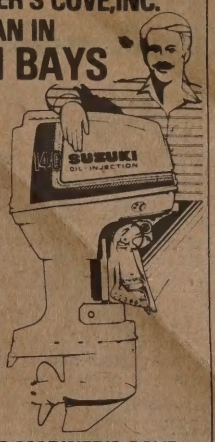

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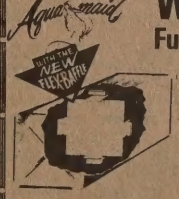

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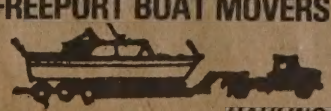

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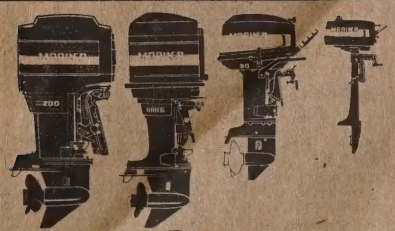

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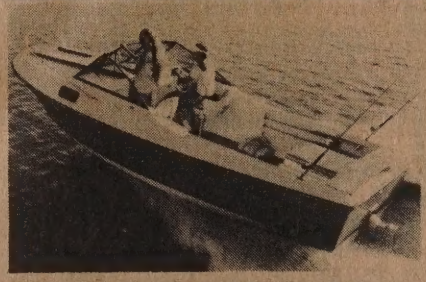

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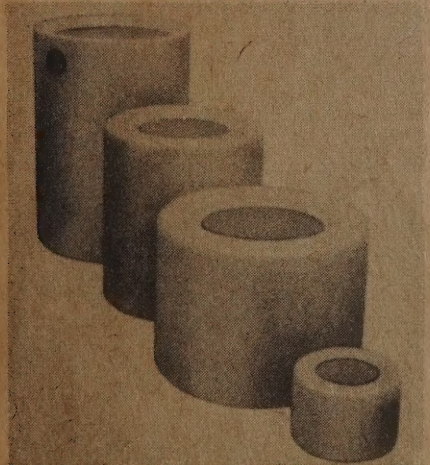

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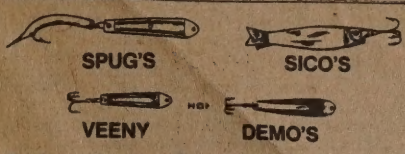

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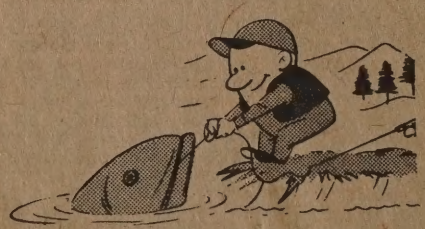

Joe Sander with a catch of 44 flounder taken at buoy 42 on worms and mussel chum back in October. Photo courtesy of Skidmore's Fishing Station.

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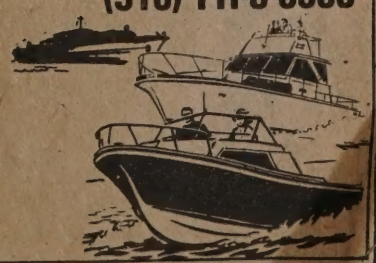

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